THE CHILD IN THE TEMPLE

MARION GERARD GOSSELINK

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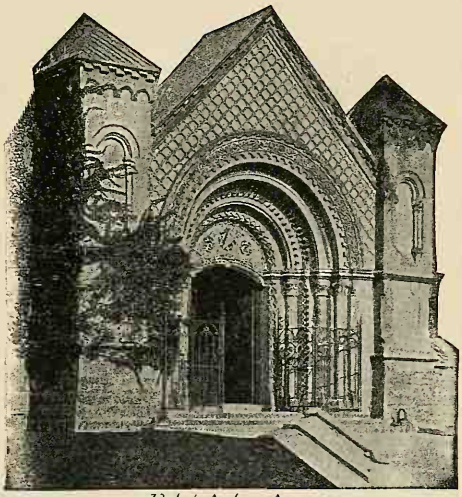

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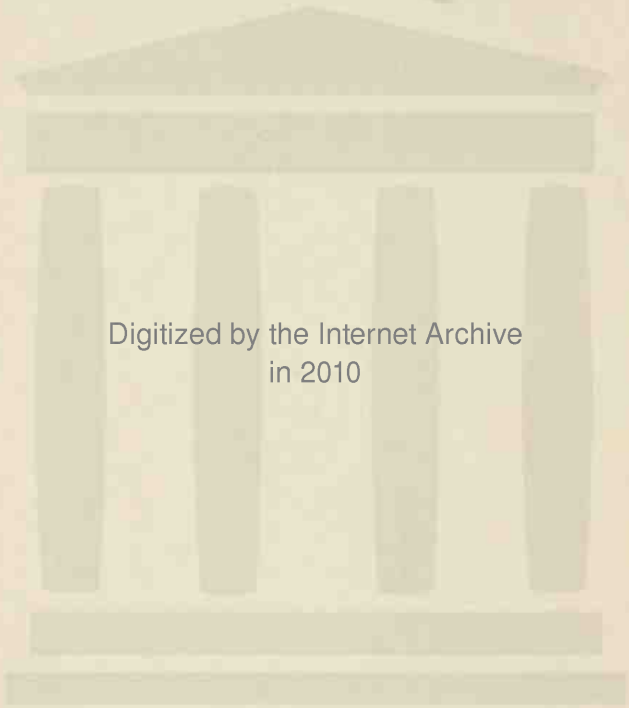

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THE CHILD IN THE TEMPLE

JUNIOR SERMONS FOR SPECIAL DAYS

BY

MARION GERARD GOSSELINK

MINISTER, TALMAGE MEMORIAL REFORMED CHURCH
PHILADELPHIA, PA.

NEW YORK
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THE CHILD IN THE TEMPLE
—B—
PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

TO

HENRIETTA PLASMAN GOSSELINK

my wife and companion along Life's Highway,
the mother of my children, Marion, Frederic, and Shirley,
this book is affectionately dedicated

PREFACE

Several of these sermons have appeared in the *Expositor* from time to time. Encouraged by the hearty response with which they have been received, I now present them to the public in book form with the hope that they may prove helpful to many who are called upon to address or teach children.

I gratefully acknowledge the kindness of the following publishers and authors for permission to make use of their works:

D. Appleton and Co., "Cape Cod Ballads," by Joseph C. Lincoln.

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M. G. G.

Philadelphia

CONTENTS

January

		PAGE
I.	NEW YEAR'S DAY: "THE LAND OF BEGINNING AGAIN"	15
II.	"WATCH YOUR STEP"	18
III.	"THE CHRISTIAN'S DIARY"	20
IV.	"PRIDE"	23

February

V.	"FIRE"	26
VI.	LINCOLN'S BIRTHDAY: "HONESTY"	29
VII.	WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY: "TRUTHFULNESS"	31
VIII.	"JUMPING AT CONCLUSIONS"	34

March

IX.	"EXCUSES"	37
X.	"PIG-HEADED PEOPLE"	40
XI.	"RESPECT FOR OLD PEOPLE"	42
XII.	PALM SUNDAY: "KING JESUS"	44
XIII.	EASTER SUNDAY: "EVERLASTING LIFE"	47

April

XIV.	APRIL FOOL'S DAY: "DECEIT"	50
XV.	ARBOR DAY: "TREES"	53
XVI.	"THE DEVIL'S HALF ACRE"	56
XVII.	"DAYLIGHT SAVING"	59

May

XVIII.	MAY DAY: "SAY IT WITH FLOWERS"	62
XIX.	MOTHER'S DAY: "MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS"	65
XX.	"ITCHING EARS"	68
XXI.	MEMORIAL DAY: "OUR HEROES"	71
XXII.	"THE GARDEN OF THE HEART"	74

G693

June

		PAGE
XXIII.	CHILDREN'S DAY: "THE CHILD IN THE TEMPLE" . . .	77
XXIV.	FLAG DAY: "UNDER TWO FLAGS" . . .	80
XXV.	"VACATION"	84
XXVI.	"GETTING EVEN"	87

July

XXVII.	INDEPENDENCE DAY: "PATRIOTISM" . .	90
XXVIII.	"SKYROCKETS"	93
XXIX.	"WATER"	96
XXX.	"HAPPINESS"	99

August

XXXI.	"STONES"	101
XXXII.	"THE WEATHER"	104
XXXIII.	"SELF-CONTROL"	107
XXXIV.	"CAGES"	109
XXXV.	"REMEMBERING"	111

September

XXXVI.	LABOR DAY: "BUSY HANDS"	113
XXXVII.	OPENING OF SCHOOL: "GREEN HANDS NOT WANTED"	116
XXXVIII.	RALLY DAY: "BUILDING WALLS" . . .	119
XXXIX.	"GIVING"	122

October

XL.	DECISION DAY: "FOLLOW YOUR LEADER" .	125
XLI.	MISSIONARY SUNDAY: "THE MAN WHO WAS NOT AFRAID"	128
XLII.	GOOD CITIZENSHIP SUNDAY: "ONE HUNDRED PER CENT. AMERICANISM" . .	132
XLIII.	HALLOWEEN: "DISGUISES"	135

November

		PAGE
XLIV.	"GREEDY DOGS"	138
XLV.	ARMISTICE DAY: "PEACE"	141
XLVI.	"CONTENTMENT"	143
XLVII.	THANKSGIVING DAY: "A THANKFUL HEART"	146
XLVIII.	"TRAPS"	149

December

XLIX.	"THE LITTLE RED DWARF"	152
L.	"DISOBEDIENCE"	155
LI.	"IDOLS"	159
LII.	CHRISTMAS DAY: "GOD'S CHRISTMAS PRESENT"	162

G693

THE CHILD IN THE TEMPLE

I

NEW YEAR'S DAY: "THE LAND OF BEGINNING AGAIN"

"For ye have not passed this way heretofore."—
Joshua 3:4.

Happy New Year, girls and boys. My wish for you is that it may be the happiest and best you have ever had.

Do you know why the first month of the year is called January? The old Romans named it so in honour of one of their kings whose name was Janus. Now Janus was different from other kings because he had two faces. With one he looked forward and with the other he looked backward; so he saw the past and the future.

On New Year's Day we look back over the past year, and we can see a great many things which we would like to do over again. There were times when we were angry, when we said things which hurt our friends and those of our family. Then too, we were disobedient and wanted our own way. I am sure that we are sorry for these things.

Don't let these failures worry you too much, however. It is well to think of them so that they will act as warnings not to repeat them. There are some people who say, "I've tried so hard to be good, but I can't, there is always something that comes along which makes me forget and I fail miserably." Well, if you

keep on looking at it in that way you will never win the victory. Don't give up. The past is past; it will never come back. The only thing to do is to decide to begin all over again.

I heard a man give a lecture one time on "What I would do if I were to live my life over again." He said a great many good things, but the most important was this, "I would begin it with Jesus as my helper." Young friends, if you ask Jesus to guide you through the coming year He will help you to avoid the mistakes of the past and make it indeed a Happy New Year.

I like to think of life as a book in which each one writes his diary. There are as many pages in this book as there are years in our lives. On the first page we write our names, and each succeeding year is a record of how we spent it. On some pages we find a good many blots and lines which make us blush, while here and there are passages which we like to read again and again. We are starting a new page at this time. What are we going to write upon it? We spoiled some of the others. Let us be careful of our penmanship.

Joshua was a young man when he became the leader of the Children of Israel. He took the place of Moses and had to bring the people to the promised land. When they came to the Jordan River he made a speech to them and told them to follow the Ark and they would cross over the river in safety, for said he, "Ye have not passed this way heretofore." They didn't know the way, but God did and He led them to the other side. The river didn't even wet their feet.

We are standing at the borders of the Land of Beginning Again. We do not know what is ahead of

us, but God knows. If we ask Him to be with us He will lead us. Let us make a new start.

"Every day is a fresh beginning,
Listen, my soul, to the glad refrain;
And spite of old sorrow and older sinning,
And troubles forecasted, and possible pain,
Take heart with the day, and begin again."

II

"WATCH YOUR STEP"

"Ponder the path of thy feet."—*Proverbs* 4:26.

If Solomon were living to-day he would say, "Watch your step," as we Americans say; or "Have an eye there," as the Canadians put it. He meant to say, "Be careful how you walk and where you walk."

Have you ever counted the number of steps you take in a day? Several thousand, don't you think?

There is a little instrument, called the pedometer, which looks like a watch. If you carry this with you it will register how many miles you walk.

You and I have a book which is better than a pedometer, for it shows us how to walk and where to walk. That book is the Bible about which David said, "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path."

Two boys were playing in the snow. One of them said, "Let's see who can make the straightest track from here to the tree." "All right," said John, and off he started. When he was half way he turned around to see his track. Then he went on for a few steps and again looked back. Finally he reached the tree.

Tom started and went directly to the tree without stopping. Whom do you thing had the straightest track? Why Tom, of course, because he kept his eye

on the tree. John's track had two crooks in it where he had turned to look around.

Every step we take is important. We must look ahead. If we look at Jesus He will keep our steps straight.

Out in the West is a huge rock or boulder. When we boys went to gather hazelnuts we used to climb on it to see the print of an Indian moccasin. Some one told me that years and years ago, when the rock was still soft, an Indian had stood on that spot to look over the surrounding country. He made his track there and departed. Since that time the rock hardened and that footprint will be there as long as the rock lasts, no doubt hundreds of years to come.

You and I are doing things either good or bad which will influence people all their lives. They are watching us and often do the same things just because we do them. Let us watch our step and be careful what we do. We should read the Bible and look at Jesus.

"Lives of great men all remind us,
We can make our lives sublime;
And departing leave behind us,
Footprints on the sands of time.

Footprints that perhaps another,
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother
Seeing, may take heart again."

III

"THE CHRISTIAN'S DIARY"

"The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."—*I John* 1:7.

How many of you have ever kept a diary? If you haven't, try it sometime. It will take a little time each day to write down what you have done, but it will be very interesting to read in after years. If you are going to be exact you will enter the bad as well as the good.

I have a little book here which has only three pages but it tells the whole story of my life and I trust it does of yours. It is The Christian's Diary.

The first page is as black as coal, and it is not the most pleasant page to read. It tells how my life and yours is full of sin. Every one has this page in his life's record. The Bible says, "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." How black! How black! Can it be changed or must it always stay this way? No, it must be changed, for "The soul that sinneth it shall die."

The second page is red as blood, and it stands for the Blood of Jesus which He shed on the cross for sinners such as you and me. He came to seek and to save that which was lost because He loved us so. The Bible says that, "without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins," which means that God could

not forgive your sin and mine unless some one gave his life for us. That is what Jesus did. I hope you have this page in your diary because if you do not you will never have any but the black one.

The third page is white as snow and stands for the pure soul of a saved person. You can only have a snow-white page if it is separated from the black one by the red leaf. Our text says, "The Blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." His blood is the only thing that can change black souls into white ones.

"What can make me white as snow?
Nothing but the blood of Jesus."

I wonder how many of you have such a diary? Every one may have. Jesus wants to cleanse all sinful souls. If you have only a black page in your life, and want a new, clean one, you can get it for the asking. He will gladly give it to you. Just say this prayer with me, and mean it, and Jesus will do the rest.

"Lord Jesus, I want to be perfectly whole,
I want thee forever to live in my soul,
Break down every idol, cast out every foe,
Now wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."

You will notice that this little book has a golden cover. Gold stands for Heaven. The person whose black, sinful life has been changed into a pure, white one through the Blood of Jesus Christ will go to live with the Lord in Heaven when death takes him away from this world.

It would be a fine thing if each one of us would make a little book like this and look at it often so that we might be reminded that we were once sinners but that Jesus shed His blood for us and washed our souls white and fit for Heaven.

IV

"PRIDE"

"A man's pride shall bring him low."—*Proverbs* 29:23.

Once upon a time a little frog came jumping up to his father in a very excited manner. "Oh, father, dear, I've seen such a terrible beast. He is as large as a mountain, has a long tail, and has horns on his head. I am frightened. Please tell me what it is."

The old bullfrog gave a croaking laugh as he said, "That's nothing but the farmer's Ox. He's not so big. He may be a trifle taller than I am, but not any wider." He took a long breath and puffed himself up to twice his usual size. "Was he as big as that?" he asked. "Oh, much bigger," said the little one. He huffed and puffed till he looked like a football. "Was he as large as that?" "Oh, ever so much larger." The old frog strained as hard as he could, and pop, he burst just like putting a pin into a rubber balloon. Wasn't he proud and conceited? It is true that "Pride cometh before a fall."

If you see a person walking along with his head high and his nose turned up scornfully just stand and watch him, because pretty soon he will stumble over a stick or a stone and fall flat in the dust as he deserves. Be careful that you don't imitate him.

When Doctor Kane, the Arctic explorer, came back

from his first trip to the frozen North he brought with him an Eskimo boy. He took him to all the cities he visited, and dressed him up in the cutest little spike-tail coat, long trousers, patent-leather pumps, and high silk hat, and gave him a walking stick. He was a great favourite with all the people. They petted him and really spoiled him by letting him have his way.

When Doctor Kane went on his second trip to the Polar regions he took the boy back to his old home. He was very glad to see his parents and friends and dogs once more, but he didn't seem to be satisfied any longer. He wanted to wear the clothes from the United States. You can't do that in the far North. You must wear heavy furs. His parents told him that he should not wear them outside of the snow house, but he was so proud of them that he was always wishing that he could wear them everywhere so that he could show off to the other children. He thought he knew better than his parents did.

One day when everybody had gone away from home, he put on his spike-tail coat and stove-pipe hat, and with his walking stick in his hand, crept from the snow house and stepped out upon the street. All the girls and boys ran out to see him. He felt the cold wind cutting him like a knife, but he strutted around like a peacock, showing off to the children, swinging his stick and holding his head high with pride. Soon he began to feel numb, and his feet refused to move, so he leaned against a pole.

When his parents came home they noticed that he was gone. His mother saw his fur hood and coat and boots lying on the floor and guessed what he had done.

The father rushed out and found him leaning against the pole frozen to death.

We do not like proud persons. Neither does God. Pride is a sin which keeps us away from Him. In fact God hates pride. He wants people to be humble. "A humble and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise."

V

"FIRE"

"Wickedness burneth as the fire."—*Isaiah* 9: 18.

No one knows who was the first to discover fire. Years and years ago man learned to produce it by rubbing two pieces of wood together or by striking two pieces of flint. Later on burning glasses were made so when the sun's rays shone through the glass they would ignite dry material. Our matches are a wonderful improvement over all these various ways.

Fire is man's best friend if kept under proper control, but it is our worst enemy when uncontrolled.

The other night I awoke to hear the cry of "Fire," and soon the fire-engines came clanging down the street. A house was burning, and the firemen had a great fight before they finally quenched it. The reason given was an overheated furnace which had gotten beyond control.

Evil is like an uncontrolled fire. Some people yield to evil influences easily, and before they know it they are in the grip of evil habits and all of their good intentions are being destroyed.

Forest fires are very destructive. In the wooded parts of our country we keep fire-wardens who are continually on the lookout for fires. These usually start through carelessness. Campers are not cautious or fail

to smother their fires before they leave. As a result thousands of dollars and lives are lost every year.

Wickedness and evil destroy lives. We have the Church and the Christian people to fight them.

In the Western states where there are large grain fields one often sees acre after acre burned black along the railroad tracks. The sparks from the engine fell in the dry oats or wheat and caused all this destruction. "What a great flame a little fire kindleth."

We have often read about the prairie fires started through the carelessness of people, fires which raged for miles and miles and burned up everything. People and animals had to flee for their lives. Some of the settlers had dugouts in readiness so that when they saw a fire approaching they would hide under the surface of the earth. To protect their buildings, they would plow up the ground to stop the flames.

The best way to keep from the influence of evil and wickedness is to get protection from God. Ask Him to surround your hearts and lives with good influences. Prayer, Bible reading, Church attendance, and the Sunday School will help us to keep on the lookout for temptation.

A man had three pictures. One was of a wooden garage; the other a smoking mass of ruins; and the third a new fireproof building. He told me this story: "I was in the garage business in building number one. One day I came home and they told me that my place was afire. I hurried down as quickly as I could and found a scene like picture number two. However I rebuilt and to-day I am located in building number

three. It is constructed of brick, steel and concrete. Fire can't touch it."

"How did it happen?" I asked. He answered, "Two little boys and a girl were playing house in the cellar. They started a little fire to cook dinner with, and it got away from them."

It's dangerous to play with fire, but it's more dangerous to trifle with evil. We never know what the results may be. It may spoil our souls. Let us avoid every appearance of evil.

There is hope for all those whose lives have been ruined by wickedness. Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.

If we have sinned, He will forgive us if we come to Him and He will help us to rebuild. Just as the man built a fireproof garage on the ruins of the wooden one, so our Saviour will help us to build beautiful lives which are evil-proof. He will keep us from the destroying influences of wickedness if we pray earnestly, "Deliver us from evil."

VI

LINCOLN'S BIRTHDAY: "HONESTY"

"Honest in the sight of all men."—*Romans* 12: 17.

I knew a minister about whom one of my college professors said, "He is so honest that when he opens his mouth you can look down into his heart."

Such a man was Abraham Lincoln. That is why they named him "Honest Abe."

Many stories are told to illustrate that great virtue of his.

As a boy he was very eager to study and learn, and books were scarce in the part of the country where he lived. He borrowed a copy of the "Life of Washington" from a neighbor. At night he put it between the logs of his bedroom wall. It rained and the book was ruined. He felt very badly about this and went to his neighbour and explained that his neglect had caused it. Not having money to pay for the damage he offered to "work out" the price of the book. So for two days he "pulled fodder" to make it right.

When he clerked in a store in Salem, Illinois, he was known for his honesty. One afternoon a woman came in to buy a bill of goods amounting to two dollars six and a quarter cents. When she left Lincoln added the bill again to make sure that it was correct and found that he had charged her six and a quarter cents too

much. At night when he had closed the store he walked three miles to return the overcharge, and went home happy.

At another time a woman ordered half a pound of tea. Lincoln weighed it correctly, as he thought, and the customer departed. It was closing time and Abe went home. The next morning when he came to sweep out he noticed a four ounce weight on the scale. He realised that he had made a mistake with the tea, so he weighed out four ounces more, shut the store, and took a long walk to deliver it.

No wonder that this honest, conscientious young man became our beloved President. Every one had confidence in him. They knew that he could be trusted, and during the dark days of the Civil War he was just as honest and conscientious as he was in the store when a young man.

We sometimes hear this proverb quoted, "Honesty is the best policy," but in the life of our martyred President we can see that, "Honesty is the only policy."

Some one has also said, "An honest man is the noblest work of God." And we can say that Abraham Lincoln was a noble man of God.

He was honest in the sight of all men. Let us follow his example, remembering Jesus, about whom Peter said, "Who did no sin neither was guile found in his mouth."

Let us also heed the advice of David, "Keep thy tongue from evil and thy lips from speaking guile."

VII

WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY: "TRUTHFULNESS"

"The law of truth was in his mouth."—*Malachi* 2:6.

When George Washington was sixteen years of age he was appointed public surveyor. Lord Fairfax sent him to measure and map out his large estate in Virginia. It was a new country filled with Indians and wild beasts. There was a great deal of danger connected with it, but Lord Fairfax knew that he could trust the lad. George might have said, "I'm here where no one can see me. Why should I risk my life? I'll just stay near the edge of the wilderness and draw a map as I think it ought to be. Nobody will ever know the difference, and I'll get my pay just the same." But he didn't do that.

He took a companion with him and tramped all over the land. He had exciting times and almost lost his life, but he did his work so well that a few years ago when Government men were resurveying the land they found that George Washington's measurements were absolutely correct.

Lord Fairfax knew that he could trust George and was not disappointed. Wonder if people know that we are truthful?

He was also very fond of horses. His mother had a beautiful colt which was very wild. One day he rode

the colt, and in trying to throw his rider the animal fell over backward, broke a blood-vessel and died. George went into the house and told his mother all about it and didn't try to defend himself.

At another time a liveryman offered to give a fine horse to any one who could ride him to the next town and back without being thrown. George mounted and rode away and soon came back still on the animal. The man said, "The horse is yours," but Washington refused, saying that he had been thrown once and had remounted.

Some girls and boys are afraid to tell the truth at times because they dread the consequences. We should tell the truth no matter what happens. Falsehoods may appear to help us for a while, but the truth will come to light some day. What then?

A certain firm bought a large quantity of damaged beans. They put them into barrels and put a layer of the finest beans on top, and marked each barrel, "First Class Beans."

They employed a young man to work for them who said to the manager, "Do you think it is right to mark them that way?" The manager said, "Do you think you are the head of this firm? It is none of your affair, all you have to do is to sell these beans."

Soon a customer came in who wanted to buy several hundred barrels. The low price surprised him and made him suspect that something was wrong. He asked to see the beans. The clerk was ordered to take him to the warehouse. While there the buyer said, "Are these beans as good at the bottom as they are at the top?" The young man said to himself, "Shall I

lie for the firm or shall I tell the truth?—I'll tell the truth no matter what happens." He replied, "No, sir, they are not."

The man did not buy, and as soon as he had departed the manager, who had heard the conversation, said to the clerk, "Here is your pay, we don't want a man like you."

He lost his job, but he told the truth and his conscience was clear. A few weeks after the same manager sent for him and begged him to come back at a larger salary, for he realized that the young man could be trusted and that the business would be safe in his hands.

The Bible advises us to tell the truth. "Let your yea be yea and your nay be nay." We should say what we mean and mean what we say. That made Washington great. That is why the Colonies trusted him with the first presidency, and that is why he became the Father of his Country.

VIII

"JUMPING AT CONCLUSIONS"

"Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment."—*John* 7:24.

Not long ago I read in one of the daily papers about a man who had been in a state prison for twenty years because they thought that he had killed a man. When his trial was held all the evidence was against him, and so his freedom was taken away. However, he was innocent, for another man confessed as he lay dying that he had done it. They released the prisoner at once. What a pity that this mistake had been made. The court had sentenced him according to appearances, and the wrong man had to suffer for it.

You will say, "How terrible." Yes, it is, but you and I do such things also. We jump at conclusions very often. We see a person do some little deed or say something we don't like, and then, later on, when some unfortunate circumstance arises we say, "I just know that he did it."

Way up in the frozen North is the home of the Eskimo. These interesting people live in snow-houses, eat blubber, and drink fish oil. They keep reindeer to draw their sleds, and they eat reindeer meat, and use the skins for clothes and summer tents.

When a man has many reindeer he is considered

rich; but if he has steel fishhooks he is looked upon as a millionaire.

In a certain village lived a rich Eskimo. He was wealthy because he had a large herd of deer and a number of steel fishhooks which an American explorer had given him in exchange for sealskins.

He had a beautiful daughter who was in love with one of the young men from the village. One evening the young man came to call on her just after she had washed her long black hair. It was hanging loose down her back in thick glossy folds so that it might dry. Every Eskimo woman does this once a year.

The old father, who was very proud of his fishhooks, took them out of a little skin bag and showed them to the young man, who was very much delighted and said that he wished he had one. The old man said that some day after he had married his daughter he would give him several. Then he gathered them up and put them into the pouch, and the young man went home.

The next day the old man wanted to go fishing, so he opened the pouch to look at the fishhooks, and after he had counted them he found that there was one missing. He called his daughter and asked her if she had seen it. They hunted all through the igloo but couldn't find it. At last the old man said, "Your lover must have taken it, because he said he wished he had one, and he is the only one to whom I have shown them."

So he went to the young man who denied having taken it. The old man told the other chief men about it, and they decided that the young man must either

give it back or be put to death. He insisted that he was not to blame, and so they killed him.

Just a year after that fatal evening the girl was washing and combing her hair once more, and crying as she thought of the preceding year when she felt something sharp prick her finger, and there was the lost fish-hook. Her lover was innocent, but it was too late.

The Bible says, "Let every one be slow to judge." That is excellent advice. Don't talk or act till you really know. Wait till you get the facts. Don't jump at conclusions.

IX

"EXCUSES"

"And they all with one consent began to make excuse."—*Luke* 14:18.

Jesus tells us a story about a man who prepared a supper for some guests. When everything was ready he sent his servant to invite them, but they all made excuses. One said he had a piece of ground and had to look it over. Another had bought five yoke of oxen and wanted to try them out, and a third had just married and didn't want to leave his wife. They all claimed they were too busy and didn't have the time.

That is the most common excuse people have to-day. They say, "I'm too busy to go to church and Sunday School, I haven't time to bother with it." Then there are some who, when asked to do something, say, "Oh, let John do it, I'm too busy. I really haven't the time." But they always have plenty of time for other things outside the church and Sunday School.

I know some people who are always ready to say, "I can't do it." They never really try or think to try, but from habit their mouths open wide and out comes, "I can't." I wish some one would knock the "t" out of can't. Wonder what word some of us would use then?

Most of us give up too easily. We will never get

things done that way. "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again."

Here is a good poem for girls and boys to learn:

"I'll try," is a soldier;
"I will," is a king;
Be sure they are near,
When the school-bells ring.

When school days are over,
And boys are men,
"I'll try," and "I will,"
Are good things, then.

How many times we hear some one say, "It's too hard." We have often said that when we had a difficult problem in arithmetic, or a hard lesson, or unpleasant work to do. We sat still, folded our hands, and gave up. The problem remained unsolved; the lesson unprepared; and the work undone, and we failed. How much better we felt when we pitched right in and tackled the hard thing and won out. Then we respected ourselves and were stronger for the next hard task.

Whenever a difficult task comes your way think of what President Eliot of Harvard said, "It can't be done; it never has been done; therefore I WILL DO IT."

When I was a pupil in the fourth grade we had a teacher who taught us memory gems. On Friday afternoons we held contests. The pupils were divided into two groups to see which side remembered the most. Often when one of the children failed he would

say, "I didn't have time to learn any," or, "I couldn't find one," and then the teacher would say, "Learn this one, 'He Who Is Good at Making Excuses Is Seldom Good at Anything Else.' "

There is a song one line of which says, "You can do it if you will." It is a good song to sing when we are discouraged and tempted to make excuses instead of making good.

Paul had these words for his motto, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Wouldn't that be a good motto for us?

X

"PIG-HEADED PEOPLE"

"They ceased not from their own doings, nor from their stubborn way."—*Judges* 2: 19.

The Children of Israel didn't want to do what God said. They wanted their own way and because they didn't follow His advice they got into trouble. If they had only listened they would not have had so many sad experiences. People who won't listen to reason will get their noses bumped sooner or later.

These people were stubborn like a great many of us are at times. They were like some girls and boys who say, "If you can't play my way, I won't play at all."

Do you know, they always remind me of pigs. Did you ever try to drive one through a gate? He usually makes up his mind that he wants to go the other way, and instead of making for the gate, he will run straight for you. Chase him in the opposite direction, and he will go through.

Some people are so contrary that they always want something different from others.

I read of an old Scotchman who was so contrary that when he came into a church he did everything different from all the rest. If they kneeled in prayer, he would stand; if they stood, he kneeled. When they sang, he was silent and when they were quiet he sang.

Then there are some who will not believe what you tell them no matter how well it is proven, and they will disagree just for argument sake. These are the people who will not listen to reason and sooner or later they will learn by experience.

A man built his house on the side of a volcano. Some of the older inhabitants of the country warned him and said that he was foolish, for some day, without warning, an eruption would come and bury his home under the red hot lava. But he laughed at them and pointed to the blue sky and called them "old croakers." Sure enough the old mountain rumbled one day and began to spout up liquid flames. The man escaped with his life, but his house and its contents were covered with the lava.

The ostrich is a silly bird. It buries its head in the sand and thinks because it doesn't see danger it is safe. There are people who close their eyes to danger. They won't heed advice. You can't find harder people to talk to. "None are so blind as those who will not see."

At all of the grade crossings of the railroads are the signs, "Stop, Look, and Listen." Every year there are many people killed because they did not pay any attention to these words. Others are crippled for life because they stubbornly went ahead in spite of the warning.

Pig-headed people are hard to get along with. We don't like to associate with them, and they usually suffer a great deal because they won't listen to reason.

If we would get along smoothly we must profit by the experience of others, and above all listen to God's advice and let Him have His way in our lives.

XI

"RESPECT FOR OLD PEOPLE"

"Honour thy father and thy mother."—*Exodus* 20 : 12.

This is the Fifth Commandment. God wants us to love and obey our parents. Oftentimes we think that they are old-fashioned and slow. We slight them and do not treat them with the respect which we should. We do it thoughtlessly perhaps, and yet it hurts them.

There was a young man and his wife who took care of their father. He was getting old and feeble. He broke the chinaware and soiled the linen tablecloth at times, so they decided to let him eat out of a wooden bowl in the kitchen. A few days later, their little boy was busily engaged in carving a block of wood. His father asked him what he was trying to make and he said, "A bowl for you and mother to eat from when you are old."

When the parents heard this they realised what they had been doing and asked the old father's forgiveness. They restored him to his former place in the dining room and treated him kindly.

How are we treating our parents and the older people round about us? Let us remember that we may live to be old. How shall we like to be treated then?

Three boys were going home from school one afternoon when they saw a peculiar old gentleman walking

Ray W. Shepard

along the slippery street. Snow had fallen and the man found it difficult to travel. The boys laughed at him as he slipped and almost fell. He called to them to help him, but they began to throw snowballs at his high silk hat. One of the snowballs struck him in the eye, and down he went on the pavement. He lay there with his face bleeding and shook his fist at the young scoundrels, who ran away as fast as they could.

An officer came to the rescue and called a cab for the old gentleman. He asked to be taken to the home of his nephew, whom he had not seen for twenty years.

"Well, Uncle, I am certainly glad to see you," said the nephew, "but what on earth has happened to you?" The old man told his story, and when he had finished in walked the nephew's son. "There's the boy who did it," said the uncle. "Who is he?"

"That is my son," said the nephew, "surely there must be a mistake, our Johnny is a good boy."

"He's the very boy who hit me in the eye," said the old man. "I have a beautiful gold watch in my travelling bag which I bought in Switzerland especially for him, but now he shall not have it."

The father made Johnny ask the old uncle's forgiveness and punished him besides. He is a grown man now, but has never forgotten the lesson.

"Be kind and be gentle to those who are old,
For kindness is dearer and better than gold."

XII

PALM SUNDAY: "KING JESUS"

"Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord."—*Luke* 19:38.

To-day we honour Jesus as King, and think of His Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem.

The streets of that capital city were thronged with excited crowds who were expecting to welcome the Messiah. Finally the word is passed along, "Here He comes." I think many were disappointed because they were looking for an earthly king and all they saw was a man sitting on the back of a donkey.

In olden times whenever a king came back from war they had a great parade with horses, chariots, soldiers carrying swords and spears, loads of gold and silver, and prisoners who had been captured. The king rode at the head of the procession either in a magnificent chariot drawn by fiery steeds, or seated on the back of a spirited warhorse.

How different was the triumphal procession of Jesus. Nothing to remind one of war. No chariots, soldiers, swords, or horses. He didn't wear armour, and rode on a donkey, an animal used on peaceful errands.

Jesus didn't have the glitter and pomp of a king, but he was the real King, and those who believed on him shouted, "Hosanna, blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord."

In England when the King rides through the streets the people all shout, "Long live the King." They love him and show it by such a salute. All of us who are Christians have Jesus for our King. How often do we acknowledge Him?

In history we read that Sir Walter Raleigh once took off his cloak and spread it over a muddy place in order that Queen Elizabeth might not soil her royal shoes.

The disciples and others cast their garments in the way so that Jesus might have a carpeted road. That also was a sign that they looked upon Him as their King.

The multitudes also waved palm branches and threw them on the road as a welcome and as a sign of victory. That was the usual thing to do when an Eastern Monarch made a triumphal march.

Just as these people proclaimed Jesus King so we ought to make Him the King of our lives. That is what He asks. He wants us to obey Him in everything. Paul had the right idea when he said, "That in all things He might have the pre-eminence."

Each of us has a throne in our heart. I wonder who is sitting on that throne? Who rules our lives? Who is your King?

We are told that Queen Victoria, after listening to Dean Farrar preach about the Second Coming of Christ, said to him, "I wish that the Saviour might come while I am still upon the throne, because I should like to take the crown of England and lay it at His feet."

If we are true followers of Jesus Christ we will lay

our all at His feet, and let Him occupy the throne in our hearts.

"All hail the power of Jesus' name,
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown Him Lord of all."

XIII

EASTER SUNDAY: "EVERLASTING LIFE"

"Now is Christ risen from the dead."—*I Corinthians* 15:20.

I hope that Easter Sunday means more to you than candy eggs and bunnies, for they have no connection with the day at all. It is unfortunate that people make so much of those things, for I am afraid that they have forgotten what Easter Sunday really stands for.

It is the day upon which Jesus arose from the dead. You will remember that He was crucified and died upon the cross on Good Friday. That same day His disciples and the women buried Him in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea. The Roman soldiers rolled a great stone against the door of the grave so that no one might enter.

The people thought that this was the end of our Lord, and even the disciples had lost hope of ever seeing Him again, although He had told them that He would rise again the third day.

However, early on Sunday morning, just at dawn, when the two Marys and other women came to visit the grave, they saw the stone rolled away, and an angel said, "He is not here but is risen." Peter and another disciple came also and found that Jesus was not there. He had indeed risen from the dead and during the next

forty days He was seen by the disciples and thousands of people.

But why does that make us so happy to-day? I'll tell you why. Jesus said, "Because I live ye shall live also," which means that we too shall rise from the dead.

Every one of us must die at some time. It isn't very pleasant to think about, but it is true. It would be a great deal harder to think of if it weren't for the Easter message. Wouldn't it be sorrowful to lose our mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, and friends if we knew that we would never see them again? But we know, to-day, that all those who believe on Jesus as their Saviour shall not perish but have everlasting life. We shall see all our dear ones again because Jesus died and rose again and said, "Because I live ye shall live also."

I buried a little baby the other day. It was a sweet innocent little thing. We put the body into the grave, but the soul was with Jesus, Who had sent the little rosebud to earth for a while, but had taken it back to bloom in the garden of Heaven. And some day He will take that little body and change it like to His own glorious body, as well as all the bodies of those that sleep in Him.

To-day we see the Easter lilies everywhere. They are the symbols of everlasting life. In a few days they will wither and die. We will cut off the stalk and lay the bulb aside for the winter. Did you ever see a bulb? It looks like a dry onion. One would never think that a beautiful flower would grow from it. If we plant it in some rich earth and give it proper light

and water we shall have another beautiful lily next year.

So with our bodies at death. They are put in the grave, but on the last day they will be changed and made like unto His glorious body.

XIV

APRIL FOOL'S DAY: "DECEIT"

"Let no man deceive himself."—*I Corinthians* 3: 18.

Next Wednesday is called, "April Fool's Day." It is also called "All Fools' Day." A great many people play tricks on others and are also fooled themselves.

In France the person fooled is called an "April Fish," and in Scotland a "Cuckoo." Just who started this day of joking we do not know. Some say it came from the Romans, and others from the Hindus. Sometimes mean jokes are played, but usually the tricks are harmless and cause a good laugh.

Some one has said, "A little nonsense now and then is relished by the best of men," and the Bible says, "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine." If we take care not to hurt people's feelings and cause them no harm or discomfort, we can have a great deal of wholesome fun next Wednesday. A smile is a good gloom-chaser, and we like to see a happy face and a twinkling eye.

There was once a boy who was sent out to take care of his father's sheep. He was told to watch carefully so that the wolves would not carry away the lambs. His father said, "If you should see a wolf, call as loudly as you can, and the men will come to help you." So the boy went into the meadows early in the morn-

ing. At first it was fun, but after a while he grew tired of watching. It wasn't as exciting as he thought it would be. Pretty soon he said, "I'm going to have some fun with the men." So he called out, "Help! Help! Wolf! Wolf!," and the men came running as fast as they could. They were all out of breath when they arrived, and the boy laughed and laughed. He said, "Oh, you go back home. I fooled you that time." They were very angry because they had left their work for nothing. Along about the middle of the afternoon he fell asleep and awoke suddenly to hear the sheep bleating piteously, and there was the wolf. He became very much alarmed and called, "Wolf! Wolf! Oh, why doesn't some one come?" But nobody paid any attention. He ran to the barn as fast as he could and told the men. They laughed at him and said, "You fooled us this morning, how do we know whether you are fooling us now or not?" So the wolf made a good meal of the lambs.

It doesn't pay to carry a joke too far, or to deceive people, for we can never know what it will lead to.

There are some people who wilfully tell lies so that they may make money or better themselves. They deceive others with "white lies" or half truths.

In the book of Genesis we read about Jacob and Esau, twin brothers. Their father Isaac, who was blind, wanted to give his blessing to Esau, which meant that Esau was to take his father's place after the old man died. But Jacob wanted the blessing. So he dressed up like Esau and went into his father's tent with some meat. He said, "I am Esau." His father felt his arms and said, "The voice is Jacob's voice, but

the hands are the hands of Esau. Art thou my very son Esau?" And Jacob said, "I am." Then the old man ate the meat and blessed him.

When Esau came home, Isaac found out that he had been deceived, and it grieved him very much. Jacob had to leave home to live with his uncle and later on was deceived several times himself. It never pays to tell an untruth. The one who does always deceives himself in the long run.

I heard of a boy who was given a piano on condition that he would practise faithfully every day. One day his father said to him, "John, do you practise regularly while I am away at business?" "Yes, Father," replied the boy. "Every day?" "Yes, sir." "How long did you practise yesterday?" "Three hours, sir." "And how long to-day?" "Two hours and a half." "Well, I'm glad to hear you are so regular." "Yes, Father." "What does your teacher say about you?" "Oh, he says I am getting to be a good musician."

"Well," said the father, "next time you practise be sure to unlock the piano. Here is the key. I locked the instrument last week and I have been carrying the key in my pocket ever since."

"Oh, what a tangled web we weave,
When first we practise to deceive."

Remember, girls and boys, we may be able to deceive parents, friends, and neighbors for a long, long time. Perhaps they will never find out, but God knows us through and through. We can never deceive Him.

XV

ARBOR DAY: "TREES"

"And he shall be like a tree."—*Psalm* 1 : 3.

Next Friday is Arbor Day. I hope that every one of you will have a share in planting a tree. The right kind of a tree set in the right place makes a fine contribution to our city.

Trees add greatly to the beauty of a place. Imagine a town without one. Wouldn't it seem barren? There are such communities. I wouldn't care to live there, would you? Couldn't climb into one; couldn't sit in the shade of one; couldn't make a swing; and couldn't pick apples or cherries.

Trees are very useful. They keep us cool in the summertime. When we are hot and tired from walking in the dusty streets or from playing in the sun it is a great relief to sit down on the grass under the shade of the leafy branches.

They keep us warm in the winter. In the city most of us burn coal, but I read in a forester's report that seven-eighths of the fuel used in the world is wood.

Then, too, think of the lumber that is used for building houses and barns, ships and bridges, and in making furniture, boxes, toothpicks and matches.

Turpentine, India rubber, and maple sugar come from sap. Quinine and other medicine from the bark and leaves.

We must not forget the fruit trees which give us bananas, oranges, lemons, peaches, pears, dates, figs, cherries, plums, and apples.

And what fun we have had gathering nuts from the hickory, walnut, butternut, and chestnut trees.

It would be hard to get along without these wooden friends, wouldn't it?

The Bible has a great deal to say about trees. In the very first part of Genesis it tells about the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil from which Adam and Eve ate; and in the last chapter of Revelation it tells about the Tree of Life which stands in the middle of the Golden Street of Heaven.

People are like trees. In the first Psalm we read that a godly man shall be like a tree. There are some people with whom we like to associate because we feel better for having been in their company. They cheer us up and make us happier. So in the summertime a tree refreshes us by the shadow cast by its spreading branches.

In the yard where I played when a boy, there were several trees. One of them always bore apples which never ripened. We didn't care much about biting into the green fruit, for it would make our mouths pucker. But there was another tree which gave us large, yellow, sweet apples. That was our favourite.

Some people have sour dispositions and some have sweet. Which do you prefer? Jesus said, "For every tree is known by its fruit." He referred to people when He spoke these words, and He also said, "By their fruits ye shall know them."

We like people for the good things they do. Good

deeds are the fruit that Jesus wants. So let us, "Do all the good we can, to all the people we can, in all the ways we can."

I planted a butternut tree when I was a boy, and it grew crooked. A man told me to make it stand erect when it was young so that it would grow to be a fine, straight tree. I drove a stake into the ground about five feet from its roots and tied a rope from this to the tree to force it upright. A few years ago I saw the tree again, and it had developed into a straight and sturdy trunk topped with healthy branches.

Sometimes girls and boys object to the rules which fathers and mothers make. Those are the ropes to make us grow straight. The Bible says, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." If we want to become fine grownups, we must allow ourselves to be trained.

XVI

"THE DEVIL'S HALF ACRE"

"The enemy that sowed them is the devil."—*Matthew* 13:39.

Jesus tells the story of a man who sowed good seed in his field, thinking that he was going to raise a fine crop of grain. While he slept an enemy came and sowed weeds in the same field. Wasn't that a low-down, mean, thing to do? When the seeds grew, the weeds came also, and the grain couldn't grow as it should.

In explaining the story Jesus wished to point out that the devil is always trying to make trouble in the Kingdom of Heaven and make it harder for God's children to live good lives.

In the northern part of New Jersey is a plot of ground called "The Devil's Half Acre." It is a wild place covered with jagged rocks which is the hiding place for rattlesnakes. There is an old legend which tells how these rocks came to be there. It is said that the devil was walking along one day wearing an apron which was filled with rocks. Suddenly it thundered, and he was so frightened that he dropped his load and ran away as fast as he could. He never came back for his rocks, and there they lie spoiling the ground for agriculture. Farmers can't plant anything there.

Isn't that just like Satan? He is always placing obstacles in our paths. He tries to make it as hard as possible for us to be good and to do the right.

He tried to keep Jesus from doing right. In the wilderness he tempted Jesus and suggested other ways of doing what God wanted Him to do. But Jesus didn't let Satan tempt him. He quoted the Bible; and if there is anything that will make the devil run it is God's Word. That is a sword which will drive him away. We should learn more about the Bible and use it continually.

A boy went swimming in the ocean where there were a great many man-eating sharks. He was far from shore when he saw a big blue shark coming straight for him. The shark could swim faster than he and was coming nearer and nearer. The boy remembered that his father had told him that sharks were great cowards. So he shouted with all his might and splashed the water as hard as he could. The shark became so frightened that it turned around and made straight for the open sea.

The devil is a great coward. He is easily scared. The Bible says, "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." When he comes to tempt you, resist him. Meet him as Jesus did. Say to him, "Get thou behind me Satan," and he will leave you.

A good many of us give up too easily. When an obstacle arises we say, "It's no use," and we yield to the temptation instead of fighting it.

Jason wanted the Golden Fleece. King Aletes owned it and told Jason he might have it if he would kill the dragon who guarded it; harness the fiery bulls; plough

the field of Mars; and sow the dragon's teeth. It was a hard task full of obstacles, but Jason didn't flinch. He slew the dragon, caught the bulls and ploughed the field. When he planted the dragon's teeth, immediately armed warriors sprang up, and wanted to kill him. He quickly threw a handful of dust in their eyes so they began to fight each other. Finally all were dead and Jason secured the Golden Fleece.

That is only a story, but it illustrates the fact that we should not give up when obstacles are thrown in our pathway. All temptations can be overcome. God has made a way of escape which we may find if we will only look for it. He will help us if we ask Him because "He is able to succour them that are tempted."

XVII

"DAYLIGHT SAVING"

"And the sun stood still."—*Joshua* 10 : 13.

Last night we turned our watches and clocks an hour ahead. We wanted daylight to last an hour longer so we could have more time for work and pleasure. We couldn't change the sun so we had to alter our method of computing time. This is one of the things the war taught us.

It isn't a new thing. In the Bible we read of a day when the sun didn't set because Joshua ordered it to stay up in the sky until he and his soldiers had defeated the Amorites. God allowed them to have daylight saving so that they might gain the victory over their enemies. This was also a war measure.

What do you think is the most valuable thing in the world? I hear some one say, "Gold"; another, "Diamonds"; and still another "Radium." These are all of great value, but "Time" is most precious. The use we make of it is worthy of our careful and most earnest study and attention.

You have heard it said that "Time is Money." That is true in a certain sense, but you can't buy time with money.

When Queen Elizabeth of England lay dying she cried out, "Millions for an inch of time." She was

very wealthy and would gladly have given all she had to live longer but she couldn't buy even a minute.

I wonder if we are making the most of our time? Jesus realised its value fully even when a boy of twelve. He was always doing the things God wanted Him to do. He never wasted a minute, but was always helping some one who was poor, or sick, or blind, or sinful. That is one lesson we can learn from Jesus, to improve our time and not to waste it.

There was once a Frenchman who lost an hour every morning, and it took him all the rest of the day to catch up. Many of us waste too much of our time on things that may be harmless when we might be doing something worth while. I know some people who are like the Frenchman. They realise how much they have wasted and are hurrying to catch up.

Paul tells us to redeem the time. He means to warn us that we should make good use of it because some day we shall have to give an account to God as to how we have spent it. What shall we tell Him?

I know a man who is a very successful business man. Everybody trusts him because he can be depended upon. He has two mottoes which he puts into practice: "Never put off till to-morrow what you can do to-day," and, "Yesterday is past; To-day is here; To-morrow may never come; Do It Now."

Jesus said, "I must work the works of Him that sent me while it is day, the night cometh when no man can work."

Let us not dream our time away, but practise Daylight Saving.

"We shall reap such joys in the by and by,
But what have we sown to-day?
We shall build us mansions in the sky,
But what have we built to-day?
'Tis sweet in idle dreams to bask,
But here and now do we do our task?
Yes, this is the thing our souls must ask,
What have we done to-day?."

XVIII

MAY DAY: "SAY IT WITH FLOWERS"

"The flowers appear on the earth."—*Song of Solomon* 2: 12.

Springtime is here and the flowers are waking up after their long winter sleep. They are pushing their green shoots through the blanket of soil and are lifting their beautiful faces toward us as we walk through the gardens and fields. How they cheer us! They tell us of God and ask us to think of the kind Heavenly Father who made each one.

There is a pretty little legend about the first flowers that ever bloomed upon the earth. After God had made them all and given them their names there was one little flower who forgot her name. So she went back to God and said, "Please, dear Father, I forgot my name," and God replied, "I am glad you did not forget me. I shall call you 'Little Forget-Me-Not.'" When we look at the flowers we can say with the Psalmist, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits."

Did you ever stop to think that there are millions upon millions of flowers which grow on the mountains and in the meadows which human eyes never see? I read some poetry which reminded me of that, "Full many a flower is born to blush unseen, and waste its sweetness on the desert air." However, they are not

wasted, even if no one ever sees them; they bloom for God. Sometimes people think that they are not being appreciated and that their work is useless. But let us remember, children, that if we do our best, our efforts, even though they seem in vain, are seen by our Heavenly Father and are appreciated by Him.

They tell us that in some parts of California there are acres and acres of lilies growing in all their purity. It must be a lovely sight. It reminds us of the words of Jesus, "Consider the lilies of the field how they grow, they toil not neither do they spin, and yet I say unto you that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." When we worry we should think of the fact that, if God takes care of the lilies, He will surely take care of us.

There is another lesson we can learn from a flower which is found in certain coal mining regions. Everything near the mines is covered with a fine black dust which when touched leaves a grimy spot. Amid all of this filth grows a little blossom of the purest white. No black particles cling to its petals because it is coated with a sort of enamel. You and I are living in a sinful world, but we can keep our souls pure, even though there are many temptations round about us, if we allow Jesus to clothe us in His garments of righteousness.

When I was a boy we used to observe the First of May with a pretty custom. We made May baskets from varicoloured paper in which we arranged the finest flowers we could find. As soon as it was dark we would go to the house of a friend, hang the basket on the door knob, ring the bell, and then run to the nearest hiding place to watch developments. The door

opened, and above our throbbing hearts we could hear the exclamation, "Isn't this beautiful?" As soon as we felt we could safely do so without being detected, we would leave our refuge to go to some other home. It made us feel very happy to know that we made others happy.

Flowers are messengers of love, cheer, and sympathy. They can speak to others for us. That is why we have the slogan, "Say it with flowers."

You and I can have these "thoughts of God" bring a message of love to our dear ones; a message of cheer and gladness to the sick and shut-ins; and a message of sympathy to those who sorrow. Let us make use of the ministry of flowers.

XIX

MOTHER'S DAY: "MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS"

"Forsake not the law of thy mother."—*Proverbs* 1:8.

To-day we are wearing carnations in honour of mother. For some of us this is a sad day because we no longer have mother with us. She has gone home to God, where we shall go to meet her some day. The best way to honour mother's memory is to live the life that she taught us to live and not to forsake her law.

Most of you children still have mother with you. You should be very happy for that reason and thank God for it. Make her as happy as you can every day.

"Let every day be mother's day,
Make flowers grow along her way,
And beauty everywhere."

The best way to do this is to try to live as she tells you to live.

To each one of you, your mother is the best in the world, and I am sure that she is trying to help you to be the finest kind of a person. If you want to honour her, grow up to be the kind of man or woman she should like to have you be. Don't forget what your mother has taught you.

When Moses was a baby his mother put him in a basket along the river bank so that she might hide him

from the wicked king of Egypt. The Princess found him and decided to adopt him. When she sent for a nurse to take care of the baby, God saw to it that Moses' mother was chosen, so the little fellow went back to his own home, where his mother trained him up to be a God-fearing man.

Abraham Lincoln said, "All that I am or ever hope to be I owe to my angel mother," and as we grow older we will find out more and more that our mothers had a great influence over us. If we listen to her teachings we will be kept from many temptations and dangers.

A little boy who had just learned to walk was playing in the kitchen where his mother was working. She tied one of her apron strings around his wrist so that he could pull himself up when he fell. This satisfied him for awhile, but when he grew stronger he asked his mother to untie it. She reminded him that he still needed it as he was not sure of his steps.

After many days he was tall enough to look out of the window. He saw the beautiful world and heard it calling. He tugged at the apron string and it broke. Away he ran through the open door, and as he went he laughed and said, "I didn't know that mother's apron string was so weak."

He went on and on through the fields and forests, looking at the mountains in the distance. He longed to reach them, but they were far away. At last, footsore and weary, he came to the edge of a cliff. He slipped and, as he was falling over the brink, he felt a tug at his waist and discovered that it was mother's broken apron string still tied about his body. He

pulled himself back upon the rock, and as he stood there he said, "I didn't know that mother's apron string was so strong."

Girls and boys, don't be ashamed of mother's apron strings. If you follow her advice, you will never regret it as long as you live.

XX

"ITCHING EARS"

"—having itching ears, and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."—*II Tim.* 4:3, 4.

What a blessing it is to have good hearing powers. It must be a great affliction to be stone deaf, and to miss all the good music, fine speeches, and the conversation of our dear ones and friends. Let us thank God for giving us that blessing.

It is far better to be stone deaf, however, than to have itching ears.

I once knew a lady who had this trouble, only she thought it was great fun. Her ears were always itching to hear some gossip about her neighbours. She was forever listening for something bad to tell about others and then she changed the story to suit herself. I knew a man like that too. They used to greet me with, "Did you hear the latest about So-and-so?" or "I told you so. I thought it would happen." They were the kind of people about whom Paul said, "having itching ears, and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."

People with such ears do not like the truth. If you ask them where they heard the news they will say something like this, "Well, our washerwoman's father's wife's cousin told her that the blacksmith had

told her grocer that he had heard it said by a man on the street corner." They like to think ill of people, and when they find out that a report is untrue they seem to be sorry that it isn't really true.

How we despise eavesdroppers, keyhole peepers, and gossips.

People with itching ears cannot keep a secret. They have to tell everything they hear.

King Midas was once asked to be a judge at a contest where the old Greek heroes were trying to see who was the finest musician. Apollo and Pan were by far the best, but it was hard to tell who excelled. Midas had to decide and so he said that Pan was better than Apollo. This made Apollo very angry and he caused the ears of a donkey to grow on King Midas' head. Midas didn't tell any one, but covered his ears with a cap. When he had his hair cut his barber noticed it, but Midas made him promise that he would tell no one. The barber couldn't keep it to himself; he had to say it, so he went to the bank of the river and dug a hole. Then he whispered softly into the hole, "King Midas has ass's ears," and filled it all up with dirt. But when the reeds grew up on the river bank, the wind came along and stirred them and they said, "King Midas has ass's ears," and it was no longer a secret.

How careful we should be about telling tales. We should keep things to ourselves more, and not tell everything we hear or know about a person.

There are some people who are like those of whom the Apostle Paul speaks, who "spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing."

Once there was a woman who had itching ears. She heard a story about a neighbour. Then her tongue began to wag, and soon all the town knew about it, causing the person whom it concerned a great deal of unpleasantness. One day the woman found out that the story was not true. In great sorrow she went to her minister and asked him what she should do about it. He told her to go to the market and buy a chicken, kill it, and then pick its feathers on the way home dropping them one by one, and to come to report to him the next day. She did as the minister advised, and when she called next day he said, "Now go back the same way you went yesterday and pick up all the feathers." She started out and after searching all day returned with only a few. The wind had blown them away.

"You see," said the minister, "it was easy enough to drop the feathers, but it is impossible to collect them all. In the same way it is easy enough to spread false reports, but it is impossible to right the wrong you do in that way."

Next time some one wants to tell us a tale of gossip or slander let us turn a deaf ear. We will not be bothered with itching ears if we take the advice of Jesus when He says, "Take heed therefore how you hear."

XXI

MEMORIAL DAY: "OUR HEROES"

"I remember the days of old."—*Psalm* 143: 5.

The Children of Israel had a great many heroes who fought the battles of their nation. There were Joshua, Gideon, David, and a great many more. It is very interesting to read the stories of their lives and to see how God used them in the history of the Kingdom of Israel.

To-day we remember the days of old of our own dear country, and we honour all of those heroes who gave their lives and their all for our land.

There are the Revolutionary heroes who fought under George Washington. They suffered a great deal in order that we might enjoy the blessings of freedom and liberty. We think of Bunker Hill, and Valley Forge, and of the Minute Men, and it ought to thrill us to remember that they founded our nation with their blood.

Then there are the men of the Civil War. That was a dark time in the history of our country. Brother fought against brother; each thought that he was right, and when it was over, the beloved Lincoln gave his life for the cause of Freedom. Some of these heroes are with us to-day, both the Blue and the Gray. Let us fittingly honour them, girls and boys.

Memorial Day grew out of the Civil War. It originated in the South with the decorating of the graves of the soldiers.

In 1898 there was another war to which a great many of our boys and men went. It was fought to rescue the people of the Philippine Islands from the oppression of Spain. Under such brave leaders as Admiral Dewey, Colonel Roosevelt, and others, we were victorious, and the Islands found protection under the "Stars and Stripes."

We can all remember the World War with all of its horrors. Every day, boys marched away to fight against the enemy so that there might not be another war. A great many of them never came back, and hundreds were so badly wounded that they will never be the same. We honour these men, to-day.

What we should do at this time is not to praise war, for we are a peace loving people. If you ask these soldiers who are living, if they liked to shoot and kill, they will tell you, "No." But we should praise them because they faced danger and death for the right, so that the world might be a better place to live in.

Remember that we are enjoying our homes, schools, churches, and all of our blessings because they stood up to defend these things. All the best that we have as a nation is the result of sacrifice. Men and women loved their country more than their own lives, and they gladly offered themselves in order that this nation might live.

Let us honour them, and,

". . . carry gifts of flowers,
In mem'ry of the brave,
Who fought so well through weary hours,
This blessed land to save."

And while we think of the unselfish devotion of our heroes we must not forget that Jesus laid down His life for each one of us. Our soldiers and sailors fought and died for our country, but Jesus suffered and died for the whole world that "whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life."

Let us honour Him by giving ourselves to Him.

"Just as I am, young, strong, and free,
Friend of the young who lovest me,
To consecrate my all to Thee,
Oh, Saviour dear, I come."

XXII

"THE GARDEN OF THE HEART"

"Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."—*Galatians* 6:7.

It's great fun to have a garden and to watch things grow. How many of you, boys, have a vegetable garden? Did you ever plant radish seed and get a crop of cabbage; or put a pumpkin seed into the ground and get potatoes from it? I never did, and I'm sure you never did.

How many of you, girls, have a flower garden? Suppose you plant pansies, will sweet peas grow, or hollyhock seed, will asters bloom? No, that is not possible.

When a farmer plants corn he expects to raise corn and when he sows wheat he looks for a harvest of wheat. The Bible is absolutely right when it says, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." The crop that is gathered depends upon the seed that is sown.

Now each one of us has a garden called "The Garden of the Heart," where habits grow, and this rule from the Bible holds good there also. When we do good deeds we sow seeds which will grow into good habits, but when we do bad deeds they will grow rapidly like weeds and develop into bad habits.

I read of a Scotchman named Sandy McKay who

left Scotland and went to live in Australia. After he had been there for a long time he became homesick for the land of his birth, and said to himself, "If I only had a real Scotch thistle growing in my garden I would be happy and feel at home for it would remind me of the days of my boyhood." So he sent to Scotland for some seed and carefully planted it in his back yard.

How happy Sandy was when at last he could show a healthy thistle plant to his friends. By and by the purple flowers turned to snow white heads and the wind came along and carried the downy seeds far and wide till to-day there are so many thistle plants in Australia that the people there call them, "Sandy McKay's Curse."

Sometimes we do deeds which seem desirable, but they grow into habits which are harmful to ourselves and others.

We must be careful what we sow, but we must not forget to cultivate the garden. If you do not hoe the soil or pull the weeds in your flower or vegetable garden, the plants will not flourish. The same holds true about the heart. We must be careful that we cultivate good habits and root out the bad.

A few years ago a man in the West placed this advertisement in the papers, "A Sure Way to Raise Turnips. Satisfaction guaranteed. Send One Dollar for full instructions." Many farmers who wanted to be assured of a good crop of turnips for the next year sent their dollars and received this reply, "Place your feet securely on the ground, one on each side of a growing turnip. Grasp the greens firmly with both hands and pull strongly and steadily. If these directions are

carefully followed in each case, you will have no difficulty in raising turnips."

If you would keep the Garden of your Heart free from weeds you must pull them out with both hands clasped in prayer to God and say, "Cleanse thou me from secret faults," and He will help you to pull them out by the roots so that they will never grow again.

I wonder, if we could see our hearts as God sees them, what we would find planted and growing there? Would we see good habits or bad ones?

The wise man in the Bible said, "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life." What you are in your heart of hearts is your real self.

If you want to have a beautiful character and a noble soul, you must not only be careful what you sow in the Garden of Your Heart, but also be particular how you cultivate it, for, "He that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the spirit shall of the spirit reap life everlasting."

XXIII

CHILDREN'S DAY: "THE CHILD IN THE TEMPLE"

"Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"—*Luke* 2:49.

Dear girls and boys, this is your day, and we older folks are glad you are so happy. We wish we could be young again with you. I know that the mothers and fathers here have a longing in their hearts such as the poetess had when she wrote:

"Backward, turn backward, O Time, in your flight;
Make me a child again, just for to-night."

As we have listened to your songs and recitations, and as we look into your joyous, beaming faces, we feel ashamed of ourselves when we realise how selfish we have been in keeping fifty-one Sundays for ourselves and giving you only one out of the fifty-two. We have not done this intentionally; we have just been thoughtless.

There was once a king who wanted to build a magnificent cathedral for the worship of God. He gave command that no one should contribute a single cent to its construction, except himself, on pain of death. It took a long while to erect it, but finally it was completed, and a more beautiful church had never been seen. Then the king, who was very proud of it, had a marble tablet made with letters of gold carved upon

it telling that he alone had built the temple. He placed this above the door where every one could see it plainly. It stayed up one day, and during the night the reading was altered and in the place of the king's name was that of a poor woman. The king angrily ordered it changed at once. The following night the same thing happened, and the king immediately had his name replaced. The third night, again, the woman's name appeared. Then the king perceived that God had done this.

He called the woman before him and said, "Woman, a wonderful thing has happened. Tell me the truth. How did your name get there? Did you disobey my command? What have you given to the cathedral?"

The woman fell at his feet and cried, "Mercy, O King, spare my life and I will tell thee all. I am a poor woman and earn my living by spinning. I saved up a shilling and wanted to give it to God. I feared thy command, but I bought a bundle of hay with which I fed the oxen that dragged the stone for thy cathedral."

This moved the king to tears and he realised that God had looked into this poor woman's heart and found that she had really given more than he had. He asked her forgiveness and gave her costly presents so she was poor no longer.

The church cannot get along without children, even though they cannot always do as much as older folks can. Some day you boys will be elders, deacons, trustees, and ministers; and you girls will be Sunday School teachers, and officers and members of the Ladies' Bible Class and King's Daughters' Circle. Then

you will give the girls and boys a larger share in the work of the church, won't you?

When Jesus was a boy of twelve He went to the beautiful city of Jerusalem with His parents. It was a wonderful trip. From the little town of Nazareth, with friends and neighbours, they walked and rode through villages and fields. People joined them on the way till at last a large caravan was formed. He played and talked with the other children until they came to the capital city about which they had heard so much. Then what did Jesus do? Instead of spending all of His time in looking in at the shops He went to the Temple and heard all about the things of God from the doctors. He was interested and He asked questions. That was the First Real Children's Day.

His mother and father seemed rather surprised to find Him there, but He said, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"

God wants all girls and boys to be about His business. Sometimes older people forget that children ought to have a share in God's church. Even the disciples wanted to keep them away from Jesus for fear they might disturb Him. They were mistaken, however, for He said, "Suffer little children, and forbid them not to come unto me: for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven." "And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them and blessed them." That was the Second Children's Day.

The Church is part of the Kingdom of Heaven upon earth, so He wants girls and boys in the church, not only on Children's Day, but every Sabbath day in the year.

XXIV

FLAG DAY: "UNDER TWO FLAGS"

"In the name of our God we will set up our banners."—*Psalm* 20: 5.

On Arch Street, near Second, in Philadelphia stands a small, old-fashioned, brick house. It is dear to the heart of every American girl and boy, for in it, many years ago, Old Glory was born.

During the Revolutionary War a dressmaker named Betsy Ross lived there. One day, as she stood in the doorway watching the soldiers pass by, a neighbour remarked, "What a pity that they have no flag of their own." She thought so too. She waved a farewell at the troops and went back to her work.

Presently there was a knock at the door, and when she opened it who should be there but General Washington and two men. He said,"We have come to see you on important business. Congress wants you to make a flag for the colonies." He took a paper from his pocket with a design on it, seven red stripes and six white ones with a field of blue in the upper left hand corner containing a circle of thirteen stars, one for each of the colonies.

Betsy Ross looked at it and said, "I'll try my best, but why do we want the stars six pointed like those of England? Why can't we have a five-pointed star like the ones in Heaven for the American Flag?" The

General thought it would be very hard to make a five-pointed star but Betsy Ross folded a square piece of paper and with one snip of the scissors made a perfect one. Washington was greatly pleased and gave his consent, and so the American Flag was made. Since then every time a state has come into the Union another five-pointed star has been added, until to-day there are forty-eight.

How we love our flag. It is the best flag in all the world for us. A great many people have given their lives for it, and it has saved the lives of many. Whenever we see the flag it says:

"Red, White, and Blue,
Be brave, be pure, be true."

If some one insults the flag we are always ready to defend and protect it. The best way, however, to honour the flag is by being good Americans who are brave, and pure, and true.

I know of no better way to observe Flag Day than to ask you to stand with me and salute the colors:

"I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States, and to the republic for which it stands; one nation, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

" 'Tis the star-spangled banner, oh, long may it wave,
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave."

There is another flag we should remember to-day, for we are under two flags. Every nation should be. In the United States Navy there is one flag, and only

one, which is permitted to fly above the American Flag, and that is the Christian Flag. Our nation is great because God has made it so, and, "in the name of our God we will set up our banners."

As you know the Christian Flag is also the "Red, White and Blue." The white stands for purity; the blue for righteousness; and the red cross for sacrifice." When we look at the cross, we think of Jesus and His blood, which washes our souls pure as snow so that they are righteous in God's sight.

When the Emperor Constantine was leading his army against the savage enemies from the North he looked up and saw a flaming cross in the heavens with these words, "In this sign thou shalt conquer." It is said that because of the vision he was converted to Christianity and he made the cross the standard of the Roman legions.

Now a flag tells which side you are on. I know that all of you are loyal Americans because you stood up to salute the "Stars and Stripes" a few moments ago. I wonder if you are on Jesus' side? I am going to ask all of you who are, or want to be, to stand and salute the Christian Flag with me:

"I pledge allegiance to my flag, and to the Saviour for whose kingdom it stands; one brotherhood uniting all mankind in service and love."

Let us never be ashamed to be under the banner of the Cross. The Bible says, "Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee that it may be displayed because of the truth." I hope you may all be proud to display it.

"There's a royal banner given for display
To the soldiers of the King;
As an ensign fair we lift it up to-day,
While as ransomed ones we sing.
Marching on, marching on,
For Christ counts everything but loss,
And to crown Him King, toil and sing
Beneath the banner of the cross."

XXV

"VACATION"

"Rest in the Lord."—*Psalm* 37:7.

Hurrah, school has closed for the summer! Now for a happy vacation!

I asked a boy what vacation means and he said, "Lots of time with nothing to do but play." Then I asked, "Don't you ever get tired of playing?," and he answered, "No, sir, but I do get tired of having nothing to do."

That boy was right because vacation means a rest.

It is a fine thing to rest after we have worked hard and earned a vacation. I hope you will enjoy yours immensely, girls and boys. I wonder how you will spend it?

There are different ways of resting. Some people think it means loafing, but it usually doesn't. We hear a great deal about proper recreation these days. Recreation means a "making over" or "building up."

No matter where you will spend your vacation or what you will play, you ought to ask yourself this question, "Will it make my body stronger?" It is so easy to indulge in games and to go to places which are harmful to our health. Too much candy, irregular meals, and late hours are bad for growing girls and boys.

All play ought to help us to grow to be strong men and women.

What about our minds? What kind of pictures are we going to look at and what sort of books will we read during the summer? It makes a great deal of difference what kind of stories we listen to. It is easy to poison the mind and to store it with things that will hinder us all of our lives. If you tell me what you like to read, hear, and see, I will be able to tell you what kind of a person you are.

Don't think that vacation means freedom from learning. You will learn things out of school as well as in school. By all means try to have your minds become brighter during the summer. If you keep on the alert it will help you, but if you are careless and indifferent you will have a harder time when school opens.

There is another kind of rest which every one needs. Our text says, "Rest in the Lord," or in other words spend your vacation in such a way that your soul will become more beautiful. There are some people who go to the seashore, or to the mountains, or to the country. They take good care of their bodies, get sun-burned, tanned, and fatter. They enjoy the scenery and improve their minds, but they leave their religion at home. They forget to read the Bible and neglect to pray, and when Sunday comes around they don't even think of going to church. Girls and boys often do not attend Sunday School, thinking it isn't necessary because it is vacation. That is the wrong view of rest. The Bible says, "Rest in the Lord." God doesn't stay in one place. He is everywhere, and we should worship

Him wherever we go. Our bodies are important, so are our minds, but our souls are more valuable and we should not neglect them.

So on vacation, try to make your body stronger, your mind brighter, and your soul more beautiful.

XXVI

"GETTING EVEN"

"Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot."—*Exodus* 21 : 24.

That is what the law said years and years ago. If some one put your eye out you had a right to take his eye out. If some one knocked your tooth out you might do the same thing to him. If he hit you on the head you had the privilege to hit back. If he stepped on your toes the law said you had a right to treat him in the same manner. We know better than that now, but there are still some people who do things that way. They are always talking about "getting even."

Out West on one of our Indian reservations there was an old Indian who wanted some gunpowder so he went to a trader to buy it. The trader gave him a keg and told him not to open it till he was back in his wigwam. The Indian paid his money and went his way. As soon as he came home he opened the keg and found that it contained coal-dust. He said nothing, but as you know, an Indian never forgets.

Now the trader was very fond of bear meat. About a year after this the Indian came to town and stopped at the trader's store with some meat. The trader did not recognise him and asked, "Will you sell me that

bear meat?" The Indian said, "Yes," took his money, and departed. The next week he came back and asked the trader, "How you like him meat?" The trader said, "Oh, that was the best bear meat I ever tasted." "Huh," was the reply, "Him no bear meat, him horse."

The poor Indian got even and thought it was right to do so. He didn't know any better. There are people, both old and young, who act just like the Indian, even though they know it is wrong.

Old David Harum was a shrewd man. He loved to trade horses, and he said something like this, "Do unto others as they would like to do to you, but do it first." That seems to be the motto of some people. It is twisting the Golden Rule completely around. How different from Jesus' words, "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them," which means, "treat others as you would like to be treated by them."

Not long ago a man told me how he had gotten even with a man in a land deal. He said that he saw an advertisement in the paper telling about lots for sale in Los Angeles, California. So he sent some money to a real estate agent there telling him to buy the lots for him. A few years later he went to visit in that city and thought he would find his lots and perhaps build a house on one. Imagine his disappointment when he discovered that they were cemetery lots.

Then and there he made up his mind that he would get even with the man who had sold them to him. He waited twenty years and sold him a worthless farm in the Black Hills for a large sum of money.

He laughed and laughed when he told me this story

and thought that he was very clever and shrewd to get more than even.

I've heard girls and boys say, one to the other, "Just wait till I get you, I'll get even with you for this." That is the world's way.

What does Jesus say about it? "Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you."

XXVII

INDEPENDENCE DAY: "PATRIOTISM"

"Proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof."—*Leviticus* 25: 10.

How many of you have ever seen the Liberty Bell at Independence Hall? If you haven't, ask your parents to take you there some day. You will find this text taken from the Bible written on it, "Proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof."

One hundred and forty-eight years ago a little boy told an old man to ring the bell to tell all the people that these United States were free. The boy did his duty; the old man did his duty; and the bell did its duty. That is what patriotism means, to do your duty to your country.

Some people do a lot of talking about the flag, and cheer when the band plays the "Star-Spangled Banner," but they don't obey the laws as they should and they do not try to help make our country better.

There was once an old Englishman who always carried a few acorns in his pocket everywhere he went. At every opportunity he would plant an acorn. A great many people laughed at him for this, but he said quietly, "I am planting these for my country so that in the future she can build ships from the oak trees which will grow from these acorns." That is what makes

England great, her ships. The old man wanted his country to be greater still, and people thought he was peculiar, but he was doing his duty.

If I should ask each one of you what makes our country great, I am sure I would get a great many different answers. Some of you would say, "the great cities"; others, "our large and fertile farms"; others, "our mines, factories, money, our army and our navy." All are right, but it isn't the whole truth.

Two men were standing at the beautiful Niagara Falls. One was a civil engineer and the other a statesman. The engineer said, "The United States is the richest and greatest country in the world because we have so many rivers and waterfalls which we could harness to turn all the factory wheels and make enough electricity to light and heat the whole country." The statesman said, "I disagree with you. Our country is great because of the boys and girls and the men and women in it." He was right. Patriotic people make a fine nation.

Girls and boys, you will run this country twenty-five years from now. If you love our country by doing your duty, our country will become even greater than it is to-day.

When Lord Nelson was the Commander of the British Fleet he fought the battle of Trafalgar. Just before the fighting commenced, he sent this message to every sailor under him, "England expects every man to do his duty." The men cheered and cheered, and then they fought as they had never fought before and won the victory.

On this Fourth of July, our Country sends this mes-

sage to her girls and boys: "The United States of America expects every child to do his duty." To-day God also sends his message to girls and boys, and mothers and fathers: "I expect every one to do his duty."

No one can be truly patriotic who thinks so much about his country that he forgets about God. Duty to country must go hand in hand with duty to God; for after all it is God who has made our country great. "He hath not dealt so with any nation." Let us thank Him to-day for this "Land of the free and the home of the brave."

XXVIII

"SKYROCKETS"

"For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."—*Luke* 14:11.

Did you see the display of fireworks last Fourth of July? It was great, wasn't it? Do you remember the first skyrocket? It made everybody sit up and take notice. It started off with a whiz, as if to say, "Just watch me, I'm going to reach the moon." Higher and higher it shot, and just as every one was craning his neck to watch the long streak of light, there was a crash and a bang, and it disappeared as quickly as it had come. All there was left of it was a burned stick which a boy picked up next day.

There are some people just like that. They make a fine display and try to attract the attention of all, and we expect great things from them, but somehow they fizzle out.

A girl from the city moved to the country and started to school. She wore better clothes than the rest of the children and she told wonderful things about the city so that they thought that she was almost a fairy princess. But they soon found out that she was a skyrocket girl, because she thought herself superior to her schoolmates. She failed in her studies and proved to be snobbish and selfish.

There was a country girl who had never had many advantages. She went to the city to live with her aunt and was sent to school there. Scarcely any one paid any attention to her because she was poorly dressed and not very attractive. She said to herself, "I must do the very best I can and work hard so that I shall make good." When the year ended she stood at the head of her class and had made a great many friends because she was true and genuine.

Jesus tells a story about two men. One was a proud Pharisee who went into the temple to pray and thanked God that he was not like other men. He thought that he was better than any one else, but he was a skyrocket man in God's sight.

The poor Publican didn't compare himself with others, but realised that he was a sinner, and God forgave him.

Jesus draws this lesson from the parable, "Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

How true that is. The people who are doing the real and genuine things in life are not making a great ado about it. They are quietly at work, and the longer one knows them the more he appreciates them. They will be recognised by their fellow men without blowing the trumpet to attract attention.

The Bible tells about another skyrocket man named Goliath. He was a bragging giant and wanted all the people to be afraid of him. He roared and shouted, and they all thought he was a great man, and didn't dare to fight him. But along came David, the shepherd boy. He didn't boast, but took his sling and stones

and with one well directed pebble killed the enemy of his country.

"The peacock sat on the garden wall,
As vain as a bird could be;
With his tail, his crown, and his sheeny chest,
Oh, who is as fine as he?

"The little birds cried, 'Give us a song,'
And the blackbird piped, 'Ah, do,'
'Twill be a beautiful song, we know,
From a bird so fine as you.'

"But when the poor peacock tried to sing,
Then the small birds flew away.
They said, 'Fine feathers don't make fine birds.'
They say it to this day."

It isn't the person who makes the greatest pretension, but the one who does worth-while things, who deserves honour and praise.

XXIX

"WATER"

"Can the flag grow without water?"—*Job* 8: 11.

The flag which the Bible speaks about is a sort of meadow grass which grows in swampy places or on the banks of the river. In the rainy season it is green, but in the dry season it becomes dead and brown. It cannot live without water.

Grass and flowers do not grow in the desert. It is a dreary stretch of sand. People cannot live there long unless they carry water with them. But do you know that the desert can be made into the most beautiful fields and farms? By irrigation, the driest land can become the finest garden spot. Water is brought from the distant mountains through pipes and allowed to run through little ditches all over the sand, and it becomes fertile.

Some people's souls are dried up like the flag that has no water. They are selfish, disagreeable, and unhappy. We call them "Desert Souls." They need irrigation with the water of life. Jesus can give it to them if they will ask for it.

Flowers and trees cannot live without water, and neither can human beings. We can get along without food for a longer period of time than we can without water. We ought to drink a great deal of it, if we want to keep in good health.

God has been very good to us in giving us plenty of it. Two-thirds of the earth's surface is water, and we can get all we want if we know where to go for it. In some parts of the earth it is so scarce that it is sold by street vendors, and every drop is so precious that none of it is wasted.

You cannot drink ocean water, it is too salty, so when a vessel puts out to sea they take plenty of fresh water. A sailing vessel was bound for South America with several passengers aboard. For weeks there was no breeze and they drifted along. The drinking water gave out and the people suffered terribly. Their throats became dry and parched and their tongues were thick and swollen. The sun was very hot and many died from drinking ocean water. One man crazed by thirst let down a bucket determined to drink even the briny water. Imagine the delight of all when he drew up fresh, pure, water. All eagerly drank and were saved. They had entered the mouth of the Amazon River which empties into the ocean.

Isaiah said, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters. Drink and your soul shall live." He meant to say that people couldn't live without God. We need God just as much as we need water.

When Jesus was upon earth, He sat down one day at Jacob's well. He was thirsty and asked a woman for a drink. He knew that there was something more important for people than water so He said to her, "He that drinketh of this water shall thirst again, but he that drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst." He was speaking of the water of life which He came to give us. If we believe on Jesus He

will give us that water. If we drink it our souls shall live.

Ponce de León, the Spanish explorer, heard about a fountain of youth located somewhere in Florida. He wanted to drink of its water so that he would become young again and live forever. He never found it, but we know where the real fountain of life is. Jesus has the water of life for us. He is ready and glad to give it to us. He said, "I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely." "Whosoever will let him take of the water of life freely."

XXX

"HAPPINESS"

"Whoso trusteth in the Lord, happy is he."—*Proverbs* 16:20.

Did you ever hear the story of Rasselas? He was a prince of Abyssinia who lived in the beautiful valley of happiness with his sister. It was a lovely spot, and the young man should have been satisfied, but he was not. He longed to find a place where he would be perfectly happy. His friends advised him to remain, but he could not be persuaded. He took his sister with him and went on a long journey ever seeking the desire of his heart. He travelled through city after city and always met with disappointment. At last, realising that his quest was in vain, he exclaimed, "Let us go back to our own home in the valley of happiness, for there is nothing better under the sun."

A great many of us are just like the prince. We think that we would be perfectly happy if we could only move to another city, or exchange places with some one else. We are like the donkey who always thought that the grass on the other side of the fence was sweeter than that in his own field. If we do not find happiness where we are, it will be hard to find it elsewhere. That is why Solomon said, "Whoso trusteth in the Lord, happy is he." After all, real happiness comes to us if we trust in the Lord.

Some people are always worrying. They imagine that something terrible is going to happen to them. It is no wonder that such people are not happy. They cannot be because they are unnecessarily afraid. It is really wicked to worry, for God has promised to take care of all who trust in Him. Trust means that we believe in such a way that we will try out what we believe.

Not long ago, some people went to visit the U. S. Mint in Philadelphia, where most of our money is made. They saw some hot liquid gold. The guide said that it was possible to hold it in one's hand without being burned. He wanted the tourists to try it. They laughed and said, "We believe you, but we would rather just take your word for it."

However, one lady said she would like to try it, so the guide told her to dip her hand in water first. Then taking a spoonful of the melted gold, he poured it on a thin board, and it burned a hole through it. Next he placed some in her palm. The bystanders expected to hear her scream on account of the burns received, but her hand wasn't even scorched.

Which one really believed the guide? Why the woman, of course, because she dared to do as he said.

If we really trust God we will do what He says. Then we will know what true happiness is.

XXXI

"STONES"

"What mean these stones?"—*Joshua* 4: 21.

In the city of Thebes in Egypt, there is a large statue called the "Vocal Memnon." It is said that centuries ago musical sounds issued from it every morning just as the first rays of the rising sun struck it. A legend states that it was the voice of Memnon, a Greek hero, calling to his mother. Very likely it was due to the expansion of the sandstone when the sunbeams warmed it. It was partly destroyed by an earthquake and was rebuilt, but it no longer sings.

In almost every city there are stones that talk; statues set up to honour heroes, and great men and women. The places of historic interest connected with the Revolutionary and Civil Wars are marked with boulders and tablets. Each one tells its story.

When the Children of Israel crossed the Jordan River into the Promised Land, the river parted and all of the people went through on dry ground. God performed that great miracle for them. Now Joshua knew that people would forget the blessings they had received unless they were reminded, so he ordered twelve men to each pick up a stone from the bottom of the river. These he set up as a monument so that

future generations would remember the event. Those stones talked.

One of the poets said, "There are sermons in stones." He was right, for if you will examine the stones they will speak to you about God. Scientists can tell the age of the earth by the layers of rock, and we can learn about God's creation if we will take the time to study geology.

There are a great many different kinds of stones and rocks and they are used for various purposes. Each is useful in its place and some are more valuable than others.

Stones are like people in some respects. For instance, the most conspicuous are not always the most useful.

There was a certain man who owned many beautiful jewels. He treasured them highly and was very fond of showing them to his friends. One day he displayed them to a man, who after admiring them very much said, "How much of an income do you get from these stones? It ought to be considerable because you have invested a great deal of money in them."

The rich man answered, "Not one cent comes in from them." "Come with me," said his friend, "and I will show you two stones which have not cost very much and still they are earning a living for me." He led him to the mill, down by the river, where the millstones were grinding the grain into flour.

Flashy people are not always doing the most for others. Talk cannot take the place of deeds, for after all the value of people lies in what they are doing.

I'd rather be a millstone grinding out flour for bread to feed the hungry world than the largest diamond in the crown of a king, wouldn't you?

Each stone has a story to tell; so has each life. What yours is depends upon what you are doing.

XXXII

"THE WEATHER"

> "For he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."—*Matthew* 5:45.

An old sailor was mending his nets when a man hailed him. "Good morning, Captain, can you tell me what kind of weather we are going to have to-day?" The old salt looked up with a twinkle in his eye and answered, "Well, stranger, it's just this way. In olden times when God had control of the weather a body could pretty nigh tell, but now that these new-fangled weather prophets are in charge we never know where we are at."

Don't blame the weather man. God still has charge of the weather. All the weather man can do is to predict. I am glad that I haven't got the say-so about it. If I had, I would be the most sought for man in the world, and at the same time I would have the hardest job in the world. The ice man would want me to send hot weather; the coal man would ask for winter every day; the farmer would want it regulated to suit the sowing, growing, and reaping of his crops; the man who sells rubbers and umbrellas would want it rainy; while the girls and boys who had planned a picnic or an excursion would order sunshine. How could I satisfy everybody?

Some one has said,

"As a rule a man's a fool,
When it's hot, he wants it cool;
When it's cool, he wants it hot,
Always wanting what is not."

Some one always has a grudge against the weather. Don't blame the weather man. He can't help it. You are really blaming God. After all, He sends it and He knows better what is needed than we do. If we believe this, it will help us to be patient and satisfied. So,

"When the weather is wet, we must not fret;
When the weather is dry we must not cry;
When the weather is cold, we must not scold;
When the weather is warm, we must not storm;
Be thankful together, whatever the weather."

Some people are always croaking. I said to a man the other morning, "Isn't this a fine day?" and he said, "Yes, but it won't last. Anyway it ought to be hot weather for this time of the year." The next day it was very warm. I saw him again and asked him how he liked it and he answered, "I wish it was cold like January."

We are all like that man, more or less. It has become sort of a habit to complain about the weather. How differently we would feel if we would take this kind of an attitude:

"Kinder like a stormy day, take it all together,
Don't believe I'd want it just only pleasant weather;
If the sky was allers blue, guess I'd be complainin',
And pesterin' 'round, wishin' it was rainin'."

Most people dread rain. They hate to wear rubbers and carry umbrellas. Worse than that, it makes them look mournful and sad as if everything were wrong. They forget that rain is one of the greatest blessings that God can send. If it were not for rain, we couldn't live; nothing would grow; and the earth would turn into a desert.

Next time it rains just say, "This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it."

"Rainy skies and sorry eyes,
Overcast the world, and dreary—
But the heart may stand apart
And sing, although the earth is weary."

XXXIII

"SELF-CONTROL"

"But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself."—*Daniel* 1 : 8.

When Daniel was still a boy, King Nebuchadnezzar came with his army and captured Jerusalem. When he returned to Babylon he took several Jewish boys with him, as captives, among whom was Daniel. The king noticed that he was an intelligent lad and decided to have him educated. So he was placed under the care of Melzar.

Daniel had been raised in a godly family, and he found life at the palace entirely different from that in Jerusalem. He was asked to do a great many things which he had been taught were not right, so he firmly refused. Some of the other boys did not object. They were afraid that they might displease the king if they did and lose the chance for advancement. Daniel stood for the right, even though he was far away from home. He trusted in God, and "purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself."

He practised self-control. He had learned to say "No" to the wrong. He stood up for the right and, because he did, God was with him.

He took care of his body. Melzar wanted him to eat the rich foods and to drink the wine which the king drank. Daniel was not used to eating rich foods and

he didn't believe in drinking wine so he asked permission to eat plain food and to drink water. At first, Melzar was reluctant, but finally consented to let him try it for ten days. At the end of the time, he was in better health than those who had eaten the dainties.

We ought to be careful as to what we eat and drink. We should never abuse our bodies because they are the temples of the Holy Spirit. We should control our appetites.

Daniel also took care of his mind. He stored it with good things, and it paid because when he was brought up for examination the king found him ten times wiser than the other boys. He applied himself and didn't spend his time in playing and loafing around the court.

It is very important how we treat our minds. By reading good books, seeing good pictures, and listening to good conversation we can train our minds to become strong, pure, and active. We should control our thoughts.

Daniel also took care of his soul. We read about him that he prayed three times a day. Even when nobody else prayed he did because he knew it was the right thing to do. If you want to keep your soul healthy you must pray regularly every day. So many of us pray only when it is convenient for us to do so, or when it is the proper thing to do. Daniel prayed in order that he might keep his soul in first class shape. We should do the same.

Daniel had a great many temptations. He didn't yield to them because he "purposed in his heart not to defile himself." God helped him to keep that purpose and taught him self-control. God will do that for us also, if we will ask Him.

XXXIV

"CAGES"

"Love is the fulfilling of the law."—*Romans* 13: 10.

How many of you have ever been to the Zoo? I was there a few weeks ago and looked at all of the animals in their cages. I felt sorry for the lions and tigers. They were so far away from the jungles where they would be at home. They paced back and forth as if they would like to get out. I decided that it was a good thing that the cages were locked and that they couldn't get out because they might hurt people.

I passed on to the bird-house and pitied some of the beautifully coloured tropical birds. I thought how fine it would be if they could have their freedom instead of being confined to a small place. But after a while I realised that it was a good thing that they were in cages, because they could not take care of themselves properly if they were released. They would not be able to find food, and then, too, it would be too cold outside of the aviary, and they would soon die from exposure. I came to the conclusion that cages were the proper places for these animals and birds.

How would you like to live in a cage? No? Well, we all live in cages, and it is a good thing for us. Some of the bars in our cages are "Don't" bars, and others are "Do" bars. If we did what we pleased we would

often hurt people, and we ourselves would be hurt also. That is why there are laws. They are cages.

Our parents have rules for us and they want us to obey them. They say, "Don't come home late after school." That is a "Don't" bar in our cage. When they say, "Please run an errand for us," that is a "Do" bar. They put these bars around us to protect and train us. I hope that you do not object to your cages and think that they are too cramped and narrow. If we obey our parents because we are afraid of punishment, we hate our cages, but I am sure that all of you obey your parents because you love them and don't mind the bars of your cages a bit.

The Bible says that, "Love is the fulfilling of the law." That is true. We do what our parents want us to do because we love them.

God also has laws and rules for us and he wants us to obey them. Some people don't like the Ten Commandments which are the "Do" bars and "Don't" bars which He made. If we love God we will try to keep His laws and do what He says.

Our country has laws too. Some men break them because they think that they are caged in too much. Those men do not love their country, and are harming themselves and others.

All good rules and laws are for our welfare, so let us keep them. If we love our parents we will do what they say. If we love God we will do what He says. If we love our country we will try to do right.

We like the "Do" bars and "Don't" bars in our cages because they keep us from hurting others and help us to be good.

XXXV

"REMEMBERING"

"Remember now thy creator in the days of thy youth."—*Ecclesiastes* 12: 1.

It isn't always easy to remember, is it? Sometimes we forget the simplest matters and sometimes very important things. A man said to me the other day, "If you don't use your head you have to use your feet." He had forgotten something on his way to work and had to turn back home to get it. We would save many steps and valuable time if we didn't forget.

Some people tie a string around their fingers or tie a knot in their handkerchiefs in order to remember. Even then sometimes they wonder why the string or knot is there. I was amused at a man who had a memorandum book in which he wrote down his important engagements, and then he would promptly forget where he laid the book. It caused him a great deal of annoyance.

We can train our minds to remember. The reason why we forget oftentimes is because we are careless.

Animals remember well. Once there were two boys who went to the Zoo. One of them had a bag of peanuts which he fed to the elephant. The other boy was of a mean disposition. He held out his hands as if he were going to give the big beast a peanut, and when Jumbo put his trunk through the bars the boy pricked

it with a pin. The elephant was angry and the boy ran home. Next week he came again with his mother. The elephant saw him coming, just as he was going to take his bath, and he filled his long trunk with water and squirted it all over the boy, so that he was drenched to the skin and had to go home.

God wants us to think of Him. He wants us to love Him because He loves us.

In the mountains of Switzerland a boy was herding goats. He saw a pure white flower growing at the base of a cliff. He picked it, and immediately a door opened in the rocky wall. He entered and found himself in a cave, the floor of which was strewn with precious stones of every description. A voice called out, "Help yourself, but don't forget the best."

He dropped the flower hastily and filled his pockets with the jewels. When he had gathered all he could carry, again the voice said, "Don't forget the best." He stepped back in the sunshine, his hands full of gems, and the door closed behind him. When he examined his treasures they had turned to ashes. He thought to revisit the cave for a new supply, but the rock refused to open. He had lost the key. He looked for the flower and remembered that in his greed he had left it lying on the floor of the cave. He had forgotten the best.

Some people forget God because they think of other things too much. He loves girls and boys and wants them to remember Him. He told Solomon to write this verse, "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth." Let us remember Him every day by praying to Him and by living lives that please him.

XXXVI

LABOR DAY: "BUSY HANDS"

"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might."—*Ecclesiastes* 9: 10.

When I was a boy, I used to spend part of my summer vacation on Grandfather's farm in Iowa. I thought it great fun to go into the harvest fields with the men. One day we went for a load of oats. Two men pitched the golden bundles to a third, who stood on the wagon arranging them so that the greatest number might be placed on it without danger of upsetting. This man talked a great deal and didn't pay enough attention to his work. My uncle warned him, but he laughed and said that he knew how to do it.

Soon we had a big load on and we started for the barn. The wagon began to sway to one side so we jumped to the other side to balance it, but too late. It tipped over, and all the sheaves were scattered. They had to be gathered up and piled on the wagon once more. Just double the work because the man didn't pay strict attention to business.

It pays to do your work so well the first time that you won't have to do it the second time.

There was a steel worker whose business it was to rivet steel girders on sky-scrapers. At first he was very careful to see that each rivet was properly clinched. But one day he was in a great hurry to finish a beam be-

cause it was near quitting time. So he hammered it a few times without examining it to see if it was in first class shape, took his tools, and went home.

Finally the building was finished and it was beautiful to look at. On a certain day the people held exercises to celebrate its completion. A great crowd had gathered in the largest room. They had just sung America, and a man got up to make a speech, when crash! the floor gave way, and a great many people fell into the basement and were so severely injured that some died.

When they investigated the cause of the accident they found that one of the girders had given way. It was the very same one which the careless man had riveted. Because he failed to do with his might what his hands found to do several people were killed.

We ought to be very careful how we work because we never know what the results of careless work may be.

A rope-maker became very much discouraged with his work. He said, "I stand and twist the strands all day long, and my fingers get so sore. It's dusty work too, and my lungs get all clogged up; besides I don't make very much more than enough to keep me and my family alive. I believe I am too careful. I could make more money if I hurried more and didn't twist the strands quite so tightly. Nobody would ever know the difference."

He said this just as he was leaving his work for the day. But after he had washed the dust from his face and hands and had eaten a good supper he read the Bible, and his eyes fell on the words, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might."

"That's right," he said, "that's what God wants every man to do. I'll keep right on making the best ropes I know how." He went to bed and slept peacefully.

In the morning when he came to his shop he found a sea captain waiting for him who said, "I want you to make me another rope just like the last one you made for me. That was the best I ever had. On our last voyage we encountered a terrible storm. We were in danger of being swept on the rocks. We threw out an anchor, and the rope snapped like a thread. Then we tried another with the same result. We were almost on the rocks now, and we threw out the anchor with your rope on it and it held, and there we stayed till the storm was past. You saved more than a score of lives. I want another rope like it, one I can trust."

How happy the rope-maker was. He thanked God and kept on doing his best.

"Work while you work, and play while you play,
That is the way to be happy and gay.
All that you do, do with your might,
Things done by halves are never done right."

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XXXVII

OPENING OF SCHOOL: "GREEN HANDS NOT WANTED"

> "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."—*II Timothy* 2: 15.

On next Tuesday school opens, and you will return to your lessons after a happy, care-free vacation. A boy said the other day, "I wish vacation would never end." Perhaps some of you feel that way. However, I am sure that after you have started and have spent several days at your desks you will be glad that school has begun.

A few years ago, when I was in Boston, I noticed a car "ad" in a trolley. It was placed there by some business college which was advertising for students. On the sign were two large hands painted green, underneath which were the words, "Green Hands Not Wanted." It went on to tell that men and women who were trained were more successful than those who were not, and that the man who knew how to do something was in greater demand than the man who didn't.

That is true, and that is why our country believes in sending all its girls and boys to school. It trains you to use your eyes and ears and hands so that when you are grown up you will be of more use to your country and better able to make a living.

We respect the man who knows. In the land of

Holland lived a rich man who owned a well of splendid water. One day the pump failed to work, and several men claimed they could fix it, but they all proved to be "green hands," that is, they didn't understand their business. Finally a man came who said he would repair the pump for one hundred dollars. It seemed like a big price, but as the rich man needed the water he agreed.

After about ten minutes of work, the pump was in good shape. All it needed was a new leather. The rich man grumbled and said, "How is it you charge so much? The leather cost only twenty-five cents." "Well," said the expert, "the twenty-five cents was for the leather, seventy-five cents for the work, and ninety-nine dollars is for the 'Know How.'"

The world wants men and women who know how to do things. So study hard and learn all you can in order that you may please your teachers, and your parents, and be known as a trained person.

There is another kind of training which every boy and girl needs and that is Bible training. Without that no one is really educated, no matter how much he may know about any other subject.

Saint Paul wrote a letter to a boy named Timothy, and this is what he told him, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed rightly dividing the word of truth." We would write it in this way, "Study hard so that you may please God; so that you may be a Christian who is not ashamed of what he knows about the Bible."

God doesn't want "Green Hands" to work for Him. He wants trained ones, and so He asks us to study His

Book which He says will make us "wise unto salvation."

We have Sunday School in order that we may learn all about Jesus Christ and God from the Bible, and how God wants us to live so that we may go to heaven.

Let us study the Bible at home also. Then we shall please God, and be trained workmen for Him.

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XXXVIII

RALLY DAY: "BUILDING WALLS"

"Come, and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem."—*Nehemiah* 2: 17.

In olden times they built walls around cities to keep enemies out. Such a wall surrounded the city of Jerusalem, but it wasn't strong enough to keep King Nebuchadnezzar from getting in. He broke down the wall, burned the temple, and carried most of the people away to Babylon. Later on when Cyrus became King of Babylonia he allowed the Jews to go back to Jerusalem. They began to rebuild the city, but became very much discouraged because their enemies, the Samaritans, bothered them.

A young man, named Nehemiah, was living in the palace at Shushan with the king. He was the cupbearer, which meant that he had to taste all of the king's wine first to find out whether it was good enough for the king to drink. One day some friends from Jerusalem came to visit him. They told him of the trouble the people were having at Jerusalem, and so he obtained permission from the king to go and help them.

When he arrived there he found that the first thing to do would be to build the wall to keep the Samaritans out. So he called all the people together and said, "Come, and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem."

They got busy. It was hard work, but they kept at it and in fifty-two days they completed the task. The enemy couldn't get in now, and they were free to finish the temple and build their homes.

Did you ever hear about the Great Wall of China? It was built two hundred years before Christ was born to keep out the barbarians from the North. It was 1,250 miles long, and so wide that men on horseback could ride, six abreast, on top of it. Several millions of men worked ten years to complete it, and much of it is still standing to-day.

In the country of Holland they have built walls called dykes to keep out their enemy, the ocean. If it were not for these dykes, the water would cover the highest buildings. They have rightly called it "Hollow-land."

A little boy by the name of Hans lived there. One day, as he was on his way to school, he walked along one of the dykes and saw a little stream of water trickling from a hole in its side. He didn't go to school that day and he didn't go home that night. His parents became worried and began to hunt for him. Early the next morning they found him all tired out, but he was still crouching there with his finger thrust bravely in the hole to keep back the water of the Zuyder Zee. He had saved his home and city.

You and I must build walls around our lives to keep out the bad influences. We must be careful to stop up every little crack where sin can creep in. I know of no better way to do this than to come to Sunday School to study the Bible and to learn about Jesus. That will build up good strong walls around our hearts and help us to keep evil out.

And when we come to Sunday School we will be helping to build up the school. Every girl and boy who attends is part of it. We can't have a school that is better than the children in it, for the children are the living stones from which its walls are built. Our motto for Rally Day should be, "Come, and let us build up the walls."

"If every member were just like me,
What kind of a Sunday School would our Sunday School be?"

XXXIX

"GIVING"

"Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth."—*Matthew* 6:3.

I once knew an old man who was very wealthy, but he had a stingy soul. He had made most of his money by pinching pennies. He never spent much money on himself or on any one else. In fact, he never married because he was afraid it would cost too much to support a wife. So he lived alone and kept on hoarding his money.

He was a very regular attendant at church, and when he was absent one could be pretty sure that he was ill. He entered heartily into the singing and was very attentive to the sermon, but when the plate was passed he always dropped in a copper cent.

Now it happened one morning after service when the trustees were counting the offering they found a five dollar gold piece among the coins. They were highly elated to think that one of the worshippers would make such a fine contribution. Just then our stingy friend rushed up excitedly and said he had put in a five dollar gold piece by mistake thinking it was a new cent and asked for four dollars and ninety-nine cents in change. But the treasurer of the church said, "You gave it to the Lord. It belongs to Him now and I cannot give it

back. Besides, you should not let your left hand know what your right hand doeth." The old man went away in a rage for he knew nothing about the real joy that comes from giving to the Lord. He didn't give as the Lord had prospered him, and it made him a miser.

When Jesus was standing in the temple, He noticed how the people were putting their gifts into the treasury. The rich men came with large sums, but Jesus didn't say much about them. He was interested in a poor woman who cast two mites into the box. Then He said, "This poor widow hath cast more in than all they which have cast into the treasury; for all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had even her living."

So you see that Jesus doesn't measure a gift by its size, but by the amount the person has left after giving the gift. The poor widow had nothing left so she made the greatest sacrifice.

One day a crowd of five thousand people followed Jesus into the country. It was getting late, and they were hungry. Most of them had forgotten to take food with them. Andrew found a boy who had five small barley cakes and two dried fishes for his lunch. The boy gladly gave them to Jesus. Then Jesus fed the multitude. He blessed the lunch so that there was enough for all and twelve basketsful remained. No doubt He gave the surplus to the generous lad.

This story illustrates the fact that God always blesses the person who gives to Him. Jesus said, "Give and it shall be given unto you," and God said, "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse and prove me now herewith, if I will not open the windows of heaven and

pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

Let us give to God generously, sacrificially, and willingly. Then we shall find that "it is more blessed to give than to receive."

XL

DECISION DAY: "FOLLOW YOUR LEADER"

"Looking unto Jesus."—*Hebrews* 12:2.

I wonder how many of you have ever played the game of "Follow Your Leader?" When I was a boy we used to play it often. We would choose some one to be the leader. He would take his place at the head of the line and make all sorts of strange motions which we were supposed to imitate. When he ran, we ran; when he crawled on hands and knees, we did the same. Over fences, across creeks, through dark places, up ladders, into trees, wherever he went we went, and whatever he did we had to do. If we failed, we had to become leader.

I think that every one, even after growing up, plays "Follow Your Leader." Many people do things just because other people are doing them; say things just because others are saying them; and think things just because other people are thinking them. That is all right, if others do, say, and think correctly.

We are great imitators. We copy others without thinking about it. For that reason we should be very careful about choosing our companions. If they help us to be better, we should keep them as associates, otherwise it is better to stay away from their company. You

know that if you place a rotten apple in a bag with a good one, the good one will become bad.

All of our lives we play, "Follow Your Leader." Be careful what leader you choose.

Fathers and mothers are good leaders. Let us remember that, girls and boys. They always try to do their best for us. Sometimes we think that we know better than they, but you will find out when you grow older that they knew best. So follow their advice.

But father and mother will not always be with you and other leaders may not be safe to follow. I know one leader who is the best. The Bible tells us about Him. That is Jesus. He said to His disciples, "Follow Me," and He says that to us. He never makes a mistake.

Years ago a lumberman lived in the forests of northern Michigan. One day he went into the woods to cut down some trees. The sun was shining when he started. He worked till late in the afternoon, when he noticed that a storm was coming so he decided to go home. He went in the direction from which he thought he had come in the morning, but he found that he was going deeper into the forest. He took out his compass, and it told him that he was going in the opposite direction from that which he should go, but he said to himself, "I'm sure I'm right; the compass must be wrong." So he kept going on, but became more and more confused. He took out the compass again. It still pointed in the opposite direction. He became angry and raised his arm to throw the little instrument away. But something within him said, "Don't be foolish, the compass has never deceived you; give it a trial." He lowered

his arm, turned around, and followed where the compass pointed, and came back to his cabin in the clearing just before the storm broke.

If we follow Jesus we will not go astray. He is the best Leader for every one. Let us look to Him.

XLI

MISSIONARY SUNDAY: "THE MAN WHO WAS NOT AFRAID"

"I will trust and not be afraid."—*Isaiah* 12:2.

I wonder how many of you girls and boys have ever been afraid? Well, we all have been, at certain times. It is only natural that we should, but sometimes we are afraid when we shouldn't be.

Isaiah said, "I will trust and not be afraid." That is what we should do. He meant to say that he wasn't afraid because he believed that God meant every word He said. When people are afraid they do not believe that God tells the truth.

There was a young man who studied to be a missionary, and when he had finished college he wanted to go to the islands where the cannibals live. Cannibals are black men who eat other men. He couldn't find any ship to take him to those islands because everybody was afraid to go near the cannibals. Finally he found a sea-captain who was going to sail past the place where he wanted to go, and he persuaded him to take him aboard his ship and put him off in a small boat near the shore of the island.

When they came near the place the captain said, "You had better change your mind; you are foolish. The minute you get ashore they will eat you." But the

young man said, "I must go to them to tell them about Jesus. I will trust and not be afraid because He said, 'Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.'" So the captain, seeing that he couldn't change the young man's mind, put him in a small boat and lowered it over the side of the ship. As he was rowing away the captain shouted, "Good-bye, we'll never see you again."

About ten years after, the captain with the same ship came by that way again, and he said to himself, "Here is where I let that crazy missionary go ashore." He looked up and saw a church steeple in the distance. This aroused his curiosity, so he ordered the man at the wheel to bring the ship nearer. As they came closer, they saw people standing on the shore, and the captain recognised the missionary, who called to him to come and make him a visit. But the captain said, "Not I; those cannibals will eat me." "Oh," said the missionary, "they don't do that any more. I'll promise that they won't hurt you." So the captain went ashore and had dinner with the missionary.

He wondered at everything he saw. There were good houses, where ten years ago there were grass huts. The cannibals all wore clothes instead of aprons made of leaves, and there was a fine church and a hospital.

"Well, how did you do it?" said the captain. "I surely thought they would eat you at once."

"Well," said the missionary, "as soon as I left your ship I began to pray. I asked God to take care of me. As soon as I stepped ashore the cannibals seized me and tied me to a tree. I couldn't understand what they

were saying, but from their actions I could tell what they intended to do with me. They all came to pinch me to see if I was fat. Then they built a fire and swung a big iron kettle over the flames. Then they all gathered around the fire in a circle and began to feel if their knives were sharp. I prayed to God and took out my knife, cut a piece out of my leg, and handed it to the nearest cannibal. He bit in it and then made a wry face and quickly handed it to the next man in the circle who also bit in it and made a face. So it went the rounds until it reached the king. After he had tasted it, he threw it away in disgust and motioned to one of the men to untie me because I wasn't fit to eat.

"So I stayed, learned the language, showed them how to build houses and cultivate the soil; and taught them to love Jesus. They don't eat men any more because they are Christians."

The captain looked at the missionary in amazement, and said, "You certainly were a brave man to cut a piece out of your own leg." "Oh, I don't know about that," said the missionary. "You see I have a wooden leg. While still a small boy I met with an accident, and my leg had to be amputated. It made me rebellious. I wondered why God allowed that to happen because I couldn't do all the things that the other boys did and I was afraid that it would keep me from being a missionary. But now I can see why God permitted it. He had me lose my leg in order that He might save my life and convert these cannibals. Now I know that all things work together for good to them that love God, and I trust and am not afraid."

So, girls and boys, if we really trust God we will not be afraid no matter what may happen to us, and we will know what David meant when he said, "In God have I put my trust: I will not be afraid what man can do unto me."

XLII

GOOD CITIZENSHIP DAY: "ONE HUNDRED PERCENT AMERICANISM"

"A citizen of no mean city."—*Acts* 21:39.

The Apostle Paul was proud of the fact that he was born in the city of Tarsus and that he was a Roman citizen. The laws of Rome protected him, at different times, when his enemies wanted to harm him.

You and I are proud that we are American citizens, and are thankful, to-day, for our freedom and for the protection which we enjoy under the Stars and Stripes. Our country is taking care of us. I wonder if we are taking care of our country?

On Good Citizenship Day we ask ourselves what it means to be a good citizen. We answer this question by saying, "Be a One Hundred Percent American." Well, what does that mean? It means that every girl, boy, man, and woman, ought to live in such a way that our country will be the best and safest place in the world to live in.

In the Library of Congress at Washington, D. C., this verse from the Bible is carved, "What doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God."

When the ideal American, Theodore Roosevelt, sent a message to the boys overseas during the World War he wrote these same words.

When Warren G. Harding, at his inauguration as president, took the oath of office he placed his hand upon this text.

If we live up to these words we will be "One Hundred Percent Americans."

There are three things which every good citizen should do.

The First is VOTE. I am sorry to say that there are many who do not. Some are indifferent, some too busy, and some say it doesn't make much difference whether they do or not. Girls and boys, it is one of the most important rights of a citizen. It is the only way we have in our country of saying whom we want for our rulers. I hope that every child here, when he reaches voting age, will be anxious to cast his ballot for the best man or woman who will stand for the right. We want the finest officials we can get.

If a citizen does not vote he has no right to criticise the outcome of an election. It is the duty of a "One Hundred Percent American" to VOTE as he or she thinks is right.

The Second is OBEY THE LAWS. To-day there are so many people who are breaking the laws, and some of them even think it a smart thing to do so. They are not good citizens. They do more harm than good. Laws are made for the best interests of every one. If we do not keep them we are hurting ourselves and others. "One Hundred Percent Americans" obey the laws and set the example for others. Then too, they don't shut their eyes when some are disregarding the laws. We must not only keep the law but help the officers to enforce it.

Some people say, "It isn't any of my business." They are wrong. It is our business. This is my land and yours, and we must see to it that her laws are observed.

The Third is Go To CHURCH. The Church is the best organisation in our country which is trying to make our nation better. It is teaching and preaching about the things God wants citizens to do. It holds up high ideals. If it were not for the churches this would be an unsafe place in which to live.

It is the duty of all "One Hundred Percent Americans" to attend it on Sunday, to support it, and to work for it at all times. It is God's Church; we are God's children; and we should all belong to God's Church. Then all of our citizens would be "One Hundred Percent Americans" and we would be God's nation, for the Bible says, "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance."

If we would vote right, and if we would obey the laws, we must go to Church and ask God to help us.

XLIII

HALLOWEEN: "DISGUISES"

"Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart."—*I Samuel* 16:7.

What fun it is to dress up in strange clothes and to wear a mask so that our friends and parents do not recognise us when we meet them on the street or at a party. On Halloween we want to look as much unlike ourselves as possible. If we succeed in disguising as far as clothes go, we still have to be very careful about our actions. You can often recognise people by their walk, by the way they hold their heads, or how they use their arms. I remember being at a party where a boy failed to cover his ears and we knew him at once. It is important also that we do not talk.

That reminds me of the donkey who found a lion's skin. He put it on and started down the road. Everybody thought a real lion was coming their way and fled in terror. All the horses and cattle were frightened. He laughed and laughed at his success and felt so sure that no one recognised him that he went to his home town and said to himself, "I think I'll roar." He opened his mouth and let out a loud bray. Immediately they all knew who he was and gave him a sound beating.

Halloween comes but once a year, but there are some people who are always trying to disguise them-

selves; that is, they pretend that they are different from what they really are. The Bible has a great deal to say about such people. For instance, Paul says, "If a man thinketh himself to be something when he is nothing he deceiveth himself." Sooner or later, he will be found out.

We should be natural. Jesus wants us to be. He didn't like pretence. Some of the Pharisees tried to make the people believe that they were very good men, but Jesus knew that they were not. They could not deceive Him. He told them that they reminded Him of some of the tombs which He had seen, whitewashed on the outside, but full of uncleanness within. After all, the inside counts.

The Devil is an expert at disguising himself. The Bible says that he can make himself look like an angel of light. He tries to deceive us by making us think that he isn't such a bad leader to follow after all. Don't be led astray by him. He is really the angel of darkness. If you snatch his mask off you will see his hideous face.

People who are deceived by him become two-faced. They act one way at home, another on the street, and another at church. They begin by telling little falsehoods and doing little underhanded things, till pretty soon they imitate him more and more. James describes them in this way, "A double minded man is unstable in all his ways." You can't depend on them.

Jesus tells us to avoid such people. He says, "Beware of false teachers, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves." Those are the kind of persons David refers to when he

says, "With flattering lips and with a double heart do they speak."

Keep away from them and don't imitate them. We should copy Jesus. He is good, noble, and true.

Each one of us has four selves. The one others can see; the self that our parents know; the self that we know; and the person God sees. Which do you think is the best and real self?

We may deceive others, our parents, and even ourselves, but we can never deceive God. He knows our hearts. If we ask Him to help us to be right in His sight, He will make us to be like Him. Then we shall not be ashamed to have our parents and our friends know us as we really are.

XLIV

"GREEDY DOGS"

"They are greedy dogs which can never have enough."—*Isaiah* 56: 11.

You are all familiar with the fable of the Dog and the Ox. The Ox came into his stall after a hard day's work and thought he would enjoy the hay which his owner had put in the manger for him. He was very hungry, but just as he put his nose down, up jumped a Dog, who had been lying there, who growled and snarled and refused to let the Ox eat. Wasn't he a greedy Dog? He couldn't eat the hay himself, and yet he wouldn't let the Ox have a single mouthful.

There were people just like that in Isaiah's time. They were men who were leaders. They wanted their own way all the time. There are such people to-day, a few girls and boys too. They never have enough of anything and they won't let other people have anything if they can possibly avoid it. We don't like such greedy people, do we? No wonder that Isaiah called them dogs.

I heard a story about a cruel man whose name was Bishop Hatto. This man had a great deal of farming land. He didn't work it himself, but he had men, women, girls, and boys do that. These people lived in little huts on his land. They had to work very hard for him and they had to give him almost all of

the things they raised. For this reason they had hardly enough for themselves, and often in the winter time they suffered from hunger.

The Bishop always had more than he could use for himself. His barns were full of grain, but he didn't seem to care about the poor people who were his tenants.

One summer there had been scarcely any rain so the crops were very poor. The people had worked hard and were tired out. Winter was coming on, and they didn't have much to lay up for the cold weather. Bishop Hatto made them give him most of what they had raised, and he put it all into his big barns. Then he lived an easy, comfortable life, eating and drinking the things that he liked.

By and by, when it was cold, the poor people began to suffer. They hadn't enough to feed the girls and boys. Oh, how hungry they all became, and the poor little babies cried so pitifully. So the men said, "We will go to Bishop Hatto, he has plenty to eat and he will give us some." They went to the castle where he lived, but he didn't want to bother with them. They went again and again. He told them that he needed it all himself, but they kept on asking him day after day. Finally he became tired of hearing them and said, "If you will come to-morrow, I will let you carry away all the food you want."

How happy the people were. Early next morning they came with bags, pails, wheelbarrows and anything which could hold wheat and waited patiently till the large granary was opened. When the doors swung wide everybody rushed in and began to load up.

The Bishop stood outside watching the scene with a leer on his face. He said, "Take enough so you will never have to come back again." When they were all in he quickly closed the doors and set fire to the place and burned up the building and people, saying as he did so, "Now I am rid of the rats."

As he said this he heard a noise coming from the burning barn. He was frightened and began to run toward the castle. He hurried over the bridge and drew it after him. As he did so he saw huge rats escaping from the flames. There were swarms of them, and they were coming straight for him. They swam the moat and clambered up the bank.

Bishop Hatto ran into the castle, shutting all the doors behind him. He climbed all the stairs to the topmost story and crouched there trembling and afraid. He heard the squeak of the rats as they came nearer and nearer. Soon there was a gnawing at the door, and after a short time the rats poured in by the hundreds. They sprang upon the Bishop and ate all the flesh from his bones. The greedy old wretch received his punishment for being so cruel and heartless.

We despise greedy people, but we love generous ones.

Jesus said, "Give and it shall be given unto you; good measure, and shaken together, and running over shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again."

XLV

ARMISTICE DAY: "PEACE"

"He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth."—*Psalm* 46:9.

November eleven, nineteen hundred eighteen, was a glad day in our country. Bells rang, bands played, and people cheered till they were hoarse, because the great World War had come to a close.

No wonder we were happy. No more boys would have to give up their lives in battle; no more homes would be made sorrowful; and the nations would be at peace.

What a terrible waste the war was! We are thankful it is over and hope we will never have another one.

If you will look up the word "armistice" in the dictionary you will find that it means "to stop fighting for a while." What we as Christians are looking for is an armistice which will last more than a little while. Some people say that it will not be long until there will be another great war in the world. Christian people ought to do all they can to prevent it.

God doesn't want war. He wants a permanent peace. That is why He sent Jesus Christ into the world. When He was born the angels sang, "Peace on earth, goodwill to men." Jesus is called the Prince of Peace, and when He preached His Sermon on the Mount He said, "Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be

called the Children of God." I trust that when you girls and boys grow up you will be "peacemakers" so that there shall be no more war.

No doubt you know all about the South American states of Chile and Argentine from your study of geography at school. As you know, the Andes Mountains form the boundary line between them.

Several years ago they had trouble about this boundary line and almost went to war about it. However they talked it over and settled it peaceably. Then they took all their cannon and melted them and had the metal cast into a large statue of the Christ. In nineteen hundred four they placed this statue on the boundary, way up in the mountains, thirteen thousand feet above the Pacific Ocean. There it stands with a large cross in one hand, and the other arm lifted up in blessing upon the two nations. On the granite base is carved these words, "Sooner shall these mountains crumble into dust than the people of Argentine and Chile break the peace to which they have pledged themselves at the feet of Christ the Redeemer."

That is the way in which peace will come to the world; when all nations shall pledge themselves to peace at the feet of Jesus.

The time is coming when God shall make all wars to cease unto the end of the earth, and just as the people of Chile and Argentine made their cannon into a statue, so the nations shall do as Isaiah predicted, "They shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning-hooks."

XLVI

"CONTENTMENT"

"I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content."—*Philippians* 4: 11.

There was once a king who was very unhappy. He had all that heart could wish and yet he was not satisfied. There was something lacking in his life, but he could not tell what it was. So he called all his wise men together and asked them about it. They said that happiness could be found by wearing the shirt of a perfectly happy man.

He ordered his servants to search everywhere throughout his kingdom for a perfectly happy man. They looked through the court and in all the homes of the rich, but they could not find such a person there. Finally they found a poor labouring man who was perfectly happy, but alas, he had no shirt.

Even if the man had had a shirt it would have done the king no good, because happiness cannot be put on like a dress or a suit of clothes. It doesn't come from the outside; it comes from the inside.

Paul had learned the secret of a happy life, because his heart was right with God. Only when our hearts are right with God will we find true happiness, and we can say with Paul that we are content, each in his own place.

A little snail and a big lobster were neighbours.

They lived on the shore of the Atlantic Ocean. The little snail was not satisfied with his shell. "It is much too small for me," it said, "and pinches me horribly. I wish that I had a shell like the lobster has. Wouldn't it be grand to have such a wonderful home? All the other snails would envy me. Why do I have to live like this?"

One day, as the snail was thinking in this fashion, he saw a great change come over the lobster. He was moving out of his house, for as you know a full-grown lobster sheds his shell every year. He left his old house lying there on the beach, and the snail cried out in glee, "My wish has come true, and I shall have the fine house I have always wanted. Now I guess everybody will sit up and take notice of me."

So he called to the fishes and the clams and the other little snails, "Just watch me, I'm going to live like a prince in this fine lobster shell palace." Then he crept out of his shell, and it hurt some because it was fastened to him, but he said bravely, "Good-bye, old shell, you've pinched me long enough. I'm going to be perfectly happy now and have room enough to turn around in."

The fishes and clams and other little snails watched him and remarked to one another that he was foolish. They saw him move into the big shell, but he couldn't fill it. He tried to swell out as big as he possibly could and made himself tired out, but it was no use. It wasn't as fine as he had pictured. He wished that he could go back to his old home, but by this time it was so dark that he couldn't find his way back, besides the tide had washed it away. So he had to stay there all night, and he died because he couldn't keep warm.

There are men and women and boys and girls who are never happy because they are always envious of some else. If we are not satisfied with the things that God has given to us we are committing a great sin, because He said, "Thou shalt not covet," and He also gives us what He knows is best for us.

Solomon, the wisest man who ever lived, said, "Better is little with the fear of the Lord than great treasure and trouble therewith."

If we are right with God then we will see that He is doing the right for us, and we will be contented.

XLVII

THANKSGIVING DAY: "A THANKFUL HEART"

"I will praise thee with my whole heart."—*Psalm* 138: 1.

Next Thursday we will celebrate Thanksgiving Day. Our thoughts will turn to turkey and pumpkin pie. A good many people are like the little boy at whose home I was entertained one Thanksgiving Day. He weighed himself before he sat down to dinner and he got on the scale after he had finished his dessert and found that he had gained three pounds. He thought he ought to stuff himself in honour of the occasion.

The First Thanksgiving Day was observed over three hundred years ago by the Pilgrim Fathers at Plymouth. They said, "We must have a special day on which we may thank God for all the blessings He has given us." They had had a hard time of it ever since they landed on these shores. They had suffered from the cold; they had been hungry; and a great many of them had died, but they said that, in spite of all, they still had a great many things for which to be thankful. Four men went to hunt for game and came back with all they could carry, which they served with corn and barley. The Indians were invited as guests, and together they ate the first Thanksgiving dinner in the wilds of New England. Ever since that time we have kept up the custom.

Some of us, perhaps, think that we have had a hard time during the past year, but I am sure that each one has something for which to thank our Father in Heaven.

I read about a Dutch sailor who had followed the sea all his life. One day, when he had climbed to the top of the mast, he slipped and fell to the deck. They picked him up for dead, but presently he regained consciousness and asked how badly he was injured. They told him that, aside from being severely bruised, his leg was broken, to which he cheerfully replied, "Thank God it is not my neck."

Even if we have been unfortunate in the past we can still find good reasons for being thankful.

Not long ago a man lost an arm in a railroad accident. They took him to a hospital where his wounds were dressed. The surgeon said to him, "It is very unfortunate that this should have happened to you." "Oh," said the man, "it might have been worse. I'm so thankful it was the arm with the rheumatism."

Most of us mean well enough, but I think we are forgetful. We really appreciate our blessings, but we have poor memories. Let me give you a hint how to remember the blessings of the past year. On next Thursday take a piece of paper and a pencil and make a list of them. I know you will be surprised at the number. You will need more than one sheet.

"Count your many blessings,
Name them one by one,
And it will surprise you
What the Lord hath done."

A little girl said to her father one evening, "Father, I am going to count the stars." Soon he heard her say, "One hundred—Two hundred—Five hundred." "Oh, I didn't realise there were so many."

It is very easy to say, "Thank you" with the lips. We do it one minute and forget about it the next. Real thanks come from the heart. David said, "I will praise thee with my whole heart."

Let us live lives of gratitude, for after all, "Thanksgiving is Thanksliving." "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits."

XLVIII

"TRAPS"

"The snare is laid for him in the ground, and a trap for him in the way."—*Job* 18: 10.

Did you ever watch a spider spin a web? Backward and forward and round and round it goes until the web is completed. Then Mr. Spider hides in one corner to wait for his victim. By and by a fly goes headlong into it and becomes entangled. Quickly Mr. Spider runs from his hiding place and wraps thread after thread around the unfortunate fly so that he cannot get away. What a fine meal he will make after a while.

Now that is just what Satan is trying to do with you and me. He spreads his web of temptation to catch us. We must be very careful or we will fall into his clutches.

There is a plant called the Venus Fly Trap. The leaves of this plant are beautifully coloured and would seem to make a fine resting place for some tired little bug. But the minute an insect alights, the leaf curls up quickly and holds him fast. There are temptations which may seem harmless enough, but if we yield to them we get into trouble.

There is the Pitcher Plant, whose flowers are shaped like pitchers which hold a watery liquid. Insects are attracted to this plant and try to get at the liquid. They

creep into the little pitchers, but when once in they can't get out again because there are little hairs growing downward which act as a fence, so they die there and are eaten by the plant.

That is just like the trap Satan sets for us. He tries to get us to tell an untruth. Then to cover up one lie we have to tell another, and another, till pretty soon we get in so deep we can scarcely get out again.

How many of you boys ever made a box trap for rabbits? When I was a boy we called them "figure four" traps. When Peter Rabbit nibbled the corn, the box fell over him. His appetite got him into trouble. A good many of us are just like him. We allow our appetites to run away with us, and Satan, knowing our weakness, baits his trap with things which he thinks will make us yield. It is wicked to eat, and drink, and use things, which will hurt our bodies and minds. Let us avoid these traps.

In India the natives try to catch elephants. They dig a large, deep, pit right in the path where the elephants usually walk to the water holes. They cover the pit with poles, branches, and grass, and then spread the dirt and dust over it carefully so that it looks like solid ground. Along come several elephants. The first one doesn't see any danger and he steps on the thin covering and down he goes. He can't get out, and he is either captured, or killed and eaten.

We should take a lesson from the elephant. There are a good many paths to walk and many places to go. They may look all right at first glance, but they may lead us astray. We should be very careful, and find out where they will lead to before we start out.

David knew that Satan set many traps. He found out that if he prayed God would help him to avoid them; and if he did happen to fall into one God would get him out. Let us pray the prayer that David prayed, "Pull me out of the net that they have laid privily for me," and then we can also say with him, "Mine eyes are ever toward the Lord, for He shall pluck my feet out of the net."

XLIX

"THE LITTLE RED DWARF"

"But the tongue can no man tame, it is an unruly evil full of deadly poison."—*James* 3:8.

How many of you have ever seen a dwarf? They attract a great deal of attention because they are small. We have all read about Tom Thumb and his exciting adventures in our story books. He was baked in a pie and swallowed by a cow, and got into a great many difficulties. His parents had a hard time to take care of him.

Each one of us owns a dwarf. He is all dressed in red and lives in a red cave with double doors. The outer door is red and the inner door is white. It is hard to control this dwarf so it isn't always wise to open the doors for him. He will get us into trouble if we don't watch out.

The book of James has a great deal to say about the tongue. It tells us that all kinds of animals and birds have been tamed by man, but that no one can tame the tongue. It also says that if a man is able to control his tongue he is a perfect man. Isn't it sad how we allow our tongues to run away with us? Before we know it out darts the little dwarf, and we say something that hurts others.

In Australia there is a plant called "The Stinging Plant." It looks harmless enough, but if you touch it,

you will be pricked by the poison spines. At first it does not hurt, but in a few minutes it causes severe pain. Even weeks afterward, if water touches the spot it will mean agony. Luckily this tree has a bad odour so that those who are familiar with it avoid it. Stinging tongues are like that. They produce pain the effects of which last for a long time. We always avoid such people if we can.

Let us be careful of our words. The best thing to do is to shut both doors quickly and wait till the little red dwarf calms down before he may see the light of day.

The sad thing about it is, that if hateful, hurtful words are allowed to escape, we can never recall them, no matter how much we would like to.

"Boys flying kites haul in their white winged birds,
You can't do that when you're flying words.
Careful with fire, is good advice, we know;
Careful with words, is ten times doubly so.
Thoughts unexpressed may sometimes fall back dead,
But God himself can't kill them when they're said."

The Bible says, "By your words ye shall be justified and by your words ye shall be condemned." Our friends will judge us by what we say, and we shall have to give an account to God for every idle word we speak.

When Peter was in the court of the High Priest at the trial of Jesus, the maid recognised him by the way he talked. She said, "Thy speech betrayeth thee." You and I are known by our conversation whether we belong to Jesus or not.

Let us be very careful to guard this dwarf and keep him in control. We should pray this prayer, "Keep thou the door of my lips." Then Jesus will help us to watch our words.

"Speak gently if you would speak at all,
Carve every word before you let it fall."

L

"DISOBEDIENCE"

"Children obey your parents in all things; for this is well pleasing unto the Lord."—*Colossians* 3:20.

There was once a poor little newsboy who had no parents. He lived on the street by day and slept in boxes and in sheltered spots by night. He didn't know the comforts of home and love of mother and father. He had his own way to make in the world, and he was indeed a pitiable sight one cold snowy winter evening as he stood at his corner selling papers, shivering from the blasts of the icy wind.

A kindly gentleman, who had been in the habit of buying a paper from the boy for several weeks past, stopped to talk to him. "Jimmie," he said, "how would you like to have dinner with me to-night?" Jimmie was very much surprised and stuttered bashfully, "I'd like to, sir, but I'm not fit to go with you in these clothes."

"Oh, never mind, Jimmie, just you get in my car and we will fix that up."

When they arrived at Mr. Smith's home, Jimmie was introduced to Mrs. Smith, who showed him to a room and gave him a nice suit of clothes to wear. When dinner was ready Jimmie was seated at the table between Mr. and Mrs. Smith. At first he felt ill at ease, but soon he forgot his awkwardness and greatly

enjoyed the meal, which he said was the best he ever had.

After dinner Mrs. Smith said, "Jimmie, you had better stay here to-night, it's storming terribly." So Jimmie stayed, and for the first time in his life he slept in a real bed. How soft and fine it was. It seemed like heaven to him, and he fell asleep so soundly that he awoke with a jump when he heard a knock at his door and a voice called him to breakfast.

When the meal was finished Mr. and Mrs. Smith took Jimmie into the living room and said, "We used to have a little boy of our own, just your age, but he died. How would you like to stay with us and be our boy?" Jimmie thought that would be just fine. Think of it, he would have a mother and a father and a home, and be like other boys!

Mr. Smith said, "Jimmie, as long as you obey us you shall be our boy; but if not, we cannot keep you." So Jimmie promised. He had a great time, for a few weeks, playing with the toys and helping his new father and mother, and he was very happy.

One day Mr. Smith said, "Jimmie, mother and I shall be away all day. You will find plenty to eat in the pantry, and you may play with everything you wish, but I don't want you to touch that tin box on the library table." "All right, father, thank you."

The parents left, and Jimmie began to play. He grew tired of riding the pony so he came into the house. He looked at the tin box. "I wonder what is in it? Well, I mustn't look, father said not to." So he went to the pantry for lunch. By and by his little dog, Buster, ran right under the library table. He

reached down to get him when his eye fell upon the tin box. "Wonder why I mayn't look in?" He stretched out his hand to touch it, but drew it back quickly when he thought of his father. He sat down to look at some pictures, but he kept thinking about the box. Finally he said, "I think I'll lift the lid, and just take one little peep and no one will ever know." So he did and "Squeak" out jumped a mouse. He quickly closed the lid, but it was too late. Just then he heard footsteps and his parents came in.

"Well, Jimmie, did you have a good time?" "Yes." "Did you touch the box?" "No." But he had such a guilty look that Mr. Smith doubted him and lifted the lid and found the mouse gone.

So in sorrow they sent Jimmie away. He couldn't sleep that night, neither could Mr. and Mrs. Smith. Early in the morning before the sun was up Mr. Smith went to look for him. He found him in an old box crying as if his heart would break. "Can you ever forgive me?" asked Jimmie. "That is what I came to do," said Mr. Smith, "Mother and I want you back."

Jimmie had learned his lesson and went back to be an obedient boy, who grew up to be a splendid man.

It pays to obey one's parents. They always know what is good for us, better than we do ourselves. It pleases them when we do as they say, and, oh, how it hurts them when we disobey.

There was once a boy who wanted to go to the seashore on an excursion, but his mother said, "Sam, I don't want you to go to-day; wait till next week and I will go with you." Sam began to pout and sulk. By and by he saw his friend Billy, who said, "Come

along to the excursion." "Can't," said Sam, "mother won't let me." "Oh, come on," said Billy, "I've got money enough for both of us. Your mother won't care, and next week you can go again." So Sam went.

He didn't feel right about it all day long, and just before he took the train for home he bought his mother some roses, of which she was very fond, saying as he did so, "This will make it all right."

His mother was waiting for him anxiously, as he had not been home for lunch. He felt very guilty, but he quickly said, "See what I brought from the shore for you, mother." But mother was crying and refused the flowers, saying, "I would rather have you obey me than have any present that you could give." The Bible says, "To obey is better than sacrifice."

God wants us to be obedient to our parents. That is why the Apostle Paul wrote these words, "Children obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing unto the Lord."

LI

"IDOLS"

"Little children, keep yourselves from idols."—*I John* 5:21.

Not long ago a missionary who had just returned from China showed me the ugliest wooden idol. He told me that it had been given to him by a young Chinese who had become a Christian. As long as the young man could remember he had prayed to that idol and had given it presents. His father and mother had also worshipped the hideous black thing and so had his grandparents and great-grandparents, for it was over a hundred years old.

As I examined it I said to myself, "I should think that they would know better than to bow down before such an image." I'm sure if I had it here you would heartily agree with me that it would not be hard for us to keep from worshipping it.

We think it very strange that there are people in the world to-day who really believe in idols of wood, and stone, and metal. We call them heathen, but there are people living right here in Philadelphia who worship idols who would be very highly insulted if they were called heathen.

One of these Idols is called "Money." Some people are worshipping the Dollar Mark. They have a golden god. They will scarcely do anything unless they see

money in it. They usually ask, "How much do I get out of it?"

I've heard of some girls and boys who make money their idol. They refuse to run errands or help their parents and friends unless they are paid for it.

Do you know that you can shut out the sunlight by holding a ten cent piece close to your eye? Just try it some time. Money worshippers remind me of that. They shut out God by looking at money.

It is a splendid thing to have money, if it is made in the right way and spent properly. The trouble is that a great many people put money ahead of God in their lives. Then money is an idol.

Another idol is "Fine Clothes." Every one should dress neatly and carefully. I'm sure God wants us to do that. There are some people, however, who seem to have their whole heart and soul set upon keeping up with the latest style and fashion. They wonder what other people will say about their fine dresses, hats, suits, and ties. They like to show off. I sometimes wonder at Easter time, when I read about the fashion parades on the board walks, if these people ever give Jesus a thought. If we place fine clothes ahead of Jesus we are worshipping idols.

Still another idol is "Good Times." I know that Jesus wants us to have pleasures and plenty of them. He enjoyed social times. He went to weddings and dinner parties and helped to entertain people, but He didn't overdo it.

It is a great temptation to spend too much of our time in having fun. The Bible says there is a time for everything. There is a time to laugh and a time

to play, but if we laugh and play when we ought to be doing something else we are bowing down to "Idol Good Times."

Girls and boys, have all the right kind of fun you can in its proper place, but don't worship play so much that you neglect your work, or that you forget to pray, or that it interferes with Sunday School and Church.

Remember this, that everything we love more than Jesus Christ is an idol. He wants the first place in our hearts. Love Jesus and He will help you to get rid of your idols.

"The dearest idol I have known,
Whate'er that idol be,
Help me to tear it from its throne,
And worship only Thee."

LII

CHRISTMAS DAY: "GOD'S CHRISTMAS PRESENT"

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."—*John* 3:16.

Christmas will soon be here. Every one is thinking about the presents they will give, and wondering about the presents they will receive. My little boy told me the other day that he wanted a watch, a football, a gun, a train, a dog, and a pony. Quite a long list, don't you think so? I hope that he will get them all.

What a busy time it is. The stores are filled with shoppers; the trolleys are jammed; the streets are crowded. We rush about to find suitable gifts for father, mother, sister, brother and friend. We wrap our purchases in attractive packages, hide some of them away till Christmas morning, while others are sent off by parcel post. Holly wreaths are hung in the windows, and we spend a long time in trimming the Christmas tree. Why do we do all of this? Because we celebrate the birthday of Jesus in this way.

I heard of a little boy who thought that Christmas was the birthday of Santa Claus. He had the wrong idea of the day, didn't he? I hope that you haven't.

We give presents to those whom we love, and our parents and friends give us gifts because they love us; but the best present that was ever given on Christmas

Day was given to the world by God when He sent Jesus to earth as a little babe in the manger at Bethlehem. He gave us that present because He loved us so.

On Christmas day let us think of God's present. He gave Jesus to you and to me to be our Saviour.

On that first Christmas the Little Lord Jesus got some presents too. The Wise Men from the East came to visit Him and brought Him "gold, and frankincense, and myrrh." Ever since that time He wants men and women, and boys and girls, to give Him a gift. Do you know what He wants? He wants each one of you for His own. He says, "Give me your heart." Give it to Him.

If you take the present that God gives you, and if you will give Jesus your heart, you will have the happiest Christmas you have ever had. Then you will also want to make others happy as He did.

There was once a Roman prince who had heard the story of Jesus from a missionary, but he didn't want to give his heart to Jesus. On Christmas he sat in his fine dining room at a table laden with delicious food. Just as he was about to eat, he heard a tap at the window and, looking up, saw the face of a beautiful child, and a sweet voice said, "The Christ Child is hungry."

The prince was very angry and told his soldiers to drive the child away. They did so, and as the prince took up the food it turned to ashes. Again he heard a rap, and the child's face again reappeared, and the same voice said, "The Christ Child is cold." More angry the prince again ordered the soldiers to send the child away. When they did so, the prince began

to shiver. He had his servants pile great logs on the fireplace, but it did no good. He became colder and colder, and it froze in the palace. Then the prince realised that he had made a mistake, and, springing up, he went out into the darkness to search for the child.

He wandered about the streets, and as he passed a wretched hovel he heard the pitiful cry of little children. He opened the door and found a poor mother with five little ones suffering. They had no food, no fuel, and very few clothes. He took pity on them, brought them to his palace, and fed, clothed, and warmed them. Once more he heard the tapping at the window; once more he saw the sweet face of the child; and the sweet voice said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

Then his heart was filled with joy and gladness, and he gave it to Jesus.

Let us make Christmas Day a merry one for others. Let us give our hearts to Jesus.

THE END